

Wilmslow Advanced Motorists



Trunk Road Ahead

May 2006



Wilmslow Advanced Motorists

Newsletter

May 2006

Dear all,

Welcome to the May edition of the newsletter and especially welcome are the following new 'associates' starting fixed length course number 26:-

Sally Hanley, Salim Sidi-Boumedine, Jan Exner, Catherine Barber – Brown and Maria Cooke.

Congratulations to the following who since the last newsletter have been recommended for membership of the IAM following test:-

Ben Fish

Diary Dates:-

Sunday runs

- Sun 7th May - Run 1
- Sun 21st May - Run 2
- Sun 4th June - Run 3
- Sun 18th June - Run 4
- Sun 2nd July - Run 5
- Sun 16th July - Run 6
- Sun 6th August - Run 7

All Sunday runs start from the car park behind Sainsburys in Wilmslow. Registration is at 09.30 hours, please make yourself known by checking in with Jose, Ivy or Gavin. Runs start at 10.00 hours. Please do let us know if you can not make the run as this assists in organising observers. Contact numbers are on the back cover.

Classrooms:-

Classroom & meetings are currently at the **Drum & Monkey, Moss Rose, Alderley Edge.**

These are at 7.45 for 8.00pm

Tues 2nd May - Classroom 1

Tues 27th June Classroom 2

Tues 15th Aug Classroom 3

Tues Aug 29th Classroom 1

For fixed course No 27

This venue may change so please do check before coming along.

Now that you have experienced advanced driving at first hand this is a good time to try and influence your friends and colleagues to come and enrol for the next course.

Chairman's Chat,

Well, spring is finally here and hopefully summer will be just around the corner. Apart from the better weather this brings the 'busy' period for recruiting & courses so let me start by asking that any inactive members of the group please, if you can, assist in any way you are able, whether it is by becoming an active observer, or assisting on the MDU, or in some other way with distributing publicity material.

This is the 50th Anniversary year of the IAM and there are national plans to use this milestone to get us more in the public eye, we should all see the results of this over the year and it could mean us becoming quite busy. One of the new initiatives is 'Drive Check', a driving assessment which will be launched by the IAM in May. The cost to members of the public will be £25 although there will be a number of free places to the first applicants. Further details of this will be made available shortly.

I am currently working with Perry Freeman of Stockport group in organising a 50th Birthday Bash event which will be held in the Stockport area and is likely to be on 2nd September 2006. Again volunteers will be needed to assist in the organising and observers will also be needed on the day. If you can help please let me know so that I can spread the workload and we can organise an event that gets us noticed and can be enjoyed by all. Apart from IAM & emergency services it is planned to have a full size F1 simulator, BBQ, fun rides for younger family members & a 'responsible' beer tent!! (Damn, I hope they'll let me in!)

There are a number of associates about to take their tests. To them I'd like to say, try to relax, drive as we know you can, good luck and even enjoy it, if possible. After passing your test give a thought to becoming an observer and passing on your newly proven skills to more drivers. To those newly joined, welcome and I look forward to meeting you and monitoring your progress through the course.

As ever if anyone has any ideas or problems please do contact either me or one of the other members of the team –don't be afraid to tell us about anything you're not happy about.

Finally, after my 'whinging' last edition about various driving 'faults' what do you think about having a 'Hall of shame' page both in the newsletter and on our website where we would list details of cars (Registration, type, date, time, place & nature of transgression?) whose drivers are not obeying the rules of the road?

Jerry. Chairman E-mail: chairman@w-a-m.info

IAM REGION 5 FORUM

On Saturday Feb 11th Gavin attended the Observers day at Chester.

Presentations were given by:-

Chris Tatlow	IAM Staff Examiner
Steve Mead	IAM Deputy Chief Examiner – 30 yrs in Met.
Bob Brittain	IAM Examiner – “one of ours”
Bryan Davies	IAM support
John Whittaker	GMP 26yrs

Subjects covered were:-

How to observe.	IAM National Observers Scheme.
Test booking procedure.	Senior Observers Test.
Drive Check.	Police Driver Training.

How to fail your test.

The event was a full day and lots of information was given together with some strong messages all of which will be passed on a bit at a time.

As a starter here are some extracts from Bob Brittain’s presentation entitled:- **How to fail your test.**

Whilst the title seems a bit over the top he wants associates to pass the test by meeting IAM standards .The following are not exact quotes but the words and messages are clear.

Documents don’t forget licence, MOT, insurance - no documents-
bye bye.

Nerves allowance is given **but to observers**, in test assessment/
pre-test put associate under pressure to create test environment.

Hazard assessment too fast into hazard, plan ahead..

Positioning close to centre line? - back to centre of lane if dan-
ger.**Safe progress** not too slow, not too fast.

Acceleration sense do not accelerate towards a red light.

Gears use of 5th, 4th, 3rd, - what can your car do ?

Observation person stands up in bus – will it stop. ?

Anticipation large lorry signalling left – it **will** slow down dramati-
cally and/or pull to the right.

Steering crossing hands – use push/pull.

Speeding please 30 in 30, 40 in 40, 50 in 50, 60 in 60, 70 in 70.

There is more to come – watch this space and messages from the
MDU !!!

Gavin -Chief Observer.

The Wilmslow Show

The above event is one of our main opportunities to put the IAM and its aims before the general public and recruit new associates without which we cannot survive.

This year the show will be held on Sunday July 9th at the High School playing field, Holly Road. We need as many volunteers as possible to help share the load.

July might seem a long way off but the next newsletter will be after the show.

Please show your willingness to David, Jerry or Tony.

Give us a tow

Is there anyone out there, with a vehicle fitted with a tow bar, who would be prepared to give the group 3 hours of their time on the occasional Sunday morning? The Mobile Display Unit is stored in Wilmslow and needs to be towed to the car park behind Sainsburys for 9.30 and then returned to its base at approx 12.00.

Without the unit we have no presence in the car park for recruiting, neither is there a base for associates and observers to meet. Jerry Stone (our Chairman) is the keeper of the keys and would like to hear from anybody who can help. (See back page for contact numbers)

Speeding kills

It is better to be known as a late Mr/Mrs than to be known as *the* late Mr/Mrs

.

Danger

A sign seen on an automatic restroom hand dryer:

DO NOT ACTIVATE WITH WET HANDS

Tax it or lose it

Car Tax dodgers will now face having their car crushed as Police expand their clampdown on illegal drivers.

Following the introduction of car-crushing powers under a new law for uninsured and unlicensed drivers, now people without a valid tax disc could say goodbye to their cars.

The effects of the new powers, which have been devolved from the DVLA, could have a far reaching impact as there are an estimated 29,000 untaxed vehicles in Cheshire.

Police said it was important to target untaxed drivers as the culprits were usually committing further driving offences, often not having an MOT and insurance, and police believe the drivers of these vehicles are more likely to be involved in other criminal activity.

By using these new powers, Cheshire Constabulary aims to help reduce vehicle crime and improve road safety throughout the county.

Vehicles that are seized can only be returned to the owner when they produce a valid vehicle license, with a release fee of £80.

For impounded vehicles the release fee increases to £160 if the vehicle is not reclaimed within 24 hours and as well a storage fee of £15 per day. Any unclaimed vehicles can be disposed of either by sale at auction or by crushing.

Members of the public can report unlicensed vehicles to the DVLA online at www.dvla.gov.uk

Newspaper article.

Cars have feelings

Nearly half of all car owners talk to their vehicles and a fifth worry about their feelings.

A third believe their car has a personality, whilst a fifth of women owners have a pet name for their vehicle, a survey of 2,000 drivers, by organizers of the British motor show, found.

Optometrist's view

Glasses can make driving a lot safer, providing they are worn instead of being emptied.

Surgery Logbook

Four-wheel drive cars should come with a health warning, according to the Irish Medical Organisation. An editorial in the British Medical Journal sets out why.

The bumper of a standard car hits an adult pedestrian on the lower legs. The bonnet then hits the thighs or pelvis. As a result the pedestrian's body tends to go over the bonnet and the head or a shoulder hits the windscreen. Further injuries may occur as the pedestrian makes contact with the ground. The commonest injuries from a standard car are fracture of the lower legs, injured knees, and head injury.

Because of the shape and height of four-wheel drive cars, the primary impact is not on the lower legs but on the thighs and pelvis. This is at a higher centre of gravity than the lower legs, and therefore transmits energy more efficiently. The pedestrian is less likely to go over the bonnet, and more likely to suffer serious abdominal or chest injuries. The risk of death is doubled as a consequence.

As well as the increased sales of four-wheel drive cars, the other concern is the rising number of older people. Pedestrians aged over 60 are more than four times as likely to die, in a collision with a car, than younger people are. Presumably this is because they are slower to react, cannot hear or see so well, and may be frail, resulting in severe injuries. A woman with osteoporosis, for example, would suffer more fractures than someone with normal bones.

The editorial points out that protection of pedestrians can be achieved in several ways: separation of pedestrians from vehicles; reduction of vehicle speeds; development of "smart" vehicles to avoid collisions; and improved vehicle design to minimise injury.

Whilst waiting for such safety measures to be put in place, the Irish Medical Organisation has called for warning signs to be added to four-wheel drive vehicles for the information of would-be purchasers. This sounds a bit like the labels printed on the sides of cigarette packets, and will probably have just as much effect. It might be better to encourage the drivers to join the IAM and try and stop the accidents in the first place.

Lights on motorway slip roads

Traffic lights are to be introduced on 30 motorway slip roads around the country to ease congestion.

Using technology known as ramp metering, the lights will be controlled by sensors on the slip road that will hold up cars for up to 20 seconds before letting them join the motorway.

Widely used in Holland and the US, the lights enable traffic on the motorway to run more smoothly by controlling how vehicles merge on to the nearside lane. The lights will be switched off as soon as sensors detect that cars are backing up on to the local road network.

Trials on the M3 and M27 near Southampton and on the M6 north of Birmingham have proved successful, the Highways Agency said.

It added that the lights had enabled average motorway speeds approaching junctions to increase by up to 18 per cent. Journey times had been cut by up to 11 per cent during the rush-hour peak.

While the Hampshire lights have been removed at the end of the trial, those north of Birmingham will remain as part of the £6 million scheme.

The next batch of 10 will be placed on the M6, M60 and M62 around Greater Manchester and are planned to be in operation during March.

The scheme is the latest in a series of initiatives trying to squeeze extra capacity out of Britain's increasingly clogged motorway network.

Newspaper article.

The junction near Cheadle Royal, on the M60, has the lights in place although not working when I last went past. Ed

Beware all flashers

I drive a Volvo which has dipped headlights permanently on. I used to think that in spite of this that other drivers couldn't see me and pulled out in front of me but I then realised it was because of them.

Many authorities now install raised platforms at suburban road junctions and negotiating these lifts the car up until the rear wheels hit the platform and the car levels off. This momentary raising and falling of the lights gives the entirely reasonable impression that the headlights have been flashed and the driver waiting to come out of the side road thinks I

am letting him out.

A platform at a T-junction near my home was installed allegedly to prevent accidents, but instead, in its first two weeks alone, it has caused no fewer than eight collisions and an untold number of very near ones, most involving cars on the main road with headlights on in good visibility.

Newspaper article.

Due to the condition of our roads, it also appears oncoming drivers are flashing a warning, when all too often they are merely negotiating a pothole.

Beware of foreigners

A couple of months ago the ongoing scandal of left-hand drive lorries colliding with UK motorists due to the blind spot they have on their off side flanks was the subject of comment in a newspaper article.

Recently an Audi, traveling on the A45, was sent into a 360 degree spin when an Austrian artic changed lanes without any warning. All the driver could offer as an excuse was “that he didn’t see the Audi.”

British trucks are now required to have close proximity (wide angle) mirrors. This requirement will not be adopted throughout the EU until January, and then only for new trucks of more than 7.5 tonnes.

This matter was taken up with the road safety minister and backed up by 25 emails from drivers who had been side swiped by left hand drive trucks. Since this is a problem unique to Britain it was proposed that we should insist on wide angled mirrors on all both sides for all trucks on UK roads. The minister said he was aware of the problem!!

In the meantime if it has foreign plates give it a very wide berth.

How many did you see?

April 23rd is Drive It Day, and the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs is urging owners of historic cars to drive them to work, go shopping in them or simply park them in the drive.

The day is part of a campaign to raise awareness of historic vehicles. It was on April 23rd in 1900 that 64 cars set out from London on the first day of the Thousand Mile Trial.

Car sharing reduces risk of accidents

There's strong evidence that car sharing reduces the risk of accidents, according to a new survey.

The survey, carried out by Privilege insurance, reveals that if you share your car journey with friends, family or colleagues, you are half as likely to be involved in an accident than solo drivers.

Of the 2000 respondents to the survey, 39% said they had lost concentration when driving, but only 22% said they had done so when driving with a passenger. 20% said they had been pulled over by the police when driving solo, compared to just 9% who had been stopped when driving with a passenger.

The survey suggests that car-sharing, or car-pool schemes, not only have environmental benefits, but also safety benefits. However, the survey found that less than half (48%) of motorists supported the introduction of car pool lanes on key commuter routes, although over 20% say they would be more likely to share cars if special lanes were introduced.

On average only 8% of UK motorists currently share cars, although 17% expect to car-share by 2010. The Government would like to encourage more car-sharing, and is planning pilot studies on the M61 and M62, while new car sharing lanes called High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes in South Gloucestershire have resulted in a 12% shift in the proportion of single occupant cars to car sharers.

A definition

Do you know the difference between Guts and Balls?

GUTS – is arriving home late after a night out with the lads, being assaulted by your wife with a broom, and having the guts to ask “Are you still cleaning, or are you flying somewhere?”

BALLS – is arriving home late after a night out with the lads, smelling of perfume and beer, lipstick on your collar, slapping your wife on the ass and having the balls to say: “You’re next.”

Check your photographs

A farmer from Wiltshire has received an apology after he was sent a speed camera ticket accusing him of driving at 85mph on his tractor in South Wales.

Steve Crossman was told in a letter that the speed camera had allegedly snapped him on the A465 near Neath.

However, the six-year-old-green-and-yellow tractor has a top speed of 26mph and has never been across the Severn Bridge. It would have taken him more than four hours to cover the distance from his farm in Horningsham to Abergarwed, where the offence took place.

Mid and South Wales Safety Camera Partnership said it had misread a letter in the number plate and had apologized, and retracted the ticket. The real speeding driver escaped a ticket because it was too late to issue a replacement. Mr. Crossman said "It's a good tractor, but not that good."

Newspaper article.

The Car Manual—Rewritten

Manual:

Undo.
Press and rotate to remove bulb.

Retain tiny spring.
One spanner rating.

Prise away plastic locating pegs.

Translation:

Buy a large tin of WD40.
OK - that's the glass bit of, now
fetch some pliers and a plaster.
Pingggg...where did that ***go?
A child could do this. So how did
you manage to ***** it up.
Snap off.

What's a one junction jockey?

A driver who joins the motorway and then swings across all three lanes only to swing back again as they approach the next junction and down the slip road.

Logic

The only way of discovering the limits of possibility is to venture a little way past them into the impossible.

A Brief's Message

I'm a barrister dealing with hundreds of road traffic accident claims every year. If I could offer the following tips to your readers, it would make life easier for them, as well as me and my colleagues.

Always opt for the legal protection insurance on your car or house policy. Never use solicitors for a claim where the arrangement involves them taking any proportion of the money you are awarded. Treat adverts for "no win no fee" solicitors with the same degree of scepticism you would reserve for soap-powder commercials.

Always carry a small disposable or digital camera or camera phone with you in the car. If you have an accident, take pictures of the damage to, and locations of, both vehicles, as well as any impact debris, take a picture of the other driver; a picture really is better than a thousand words and the chances of you being sued for a frivolous claim diminish enormously. Always tell your insurers and remember the insurance form might be produced in court later- so take care with it. Saying sorry does not mean you admit it was your fault, nor will the judge think as much. It might even mean the matter goes no further than the roadside.

Don't be frightened by solicitor's letters threatening huge legal bills for small accidents - it's all bluff. If the other side has solicitors involved, make sure you get one, too (via the insurance company – don't do it yourself). The insurers may nominate solicitors, but the final choice is up to you. Don't select a solicitor on the basis that he is a friend or because he did a good job with your house conveyance.

Don't believe anything your mates tell you about courts, compensation, making a claim or any other legal issue. Advice for nothing is worth exactly nothing.

Don't take the claim personally and keep a sense of proportion. It's a car accident not a Senate hearing. Clients who tell me it's a "matter of principle" have either more money than sense or fail to understand what the court system is there for.

Newspaper article.

Skid Pan

Vanessa Torr is our co-ordinator for the skid Pan so if you are interested in experiencing action on a skid pan please see her on a Sunday morning run.

Vanessa will forward your names to Bob Brittain who very efficiently organises these events for us. Anyone can attend as long as they hold a full, valid, British driving licence. Current fees are:

Members of Advanced Driving Groups £37.50 Non-members £40.00.

It sometimes takes a while before you hear as it is very popular - the sooner you act, the sooner Bob can include you. If you e-mail Bob direct he will need your Group name and your membership number. Please let Vanessa know if you do so and contact her with any queries.

Shrinking Numbers

The number of young people aged 17-24 who hold a driving licence has fallen from 43 per cent to 26 per cent. The finding, published in *Motor Transport* magazine, comes from the Department for Transport's "Transport Trends 2005" report, which looks at statistics from 1989 -2004.

The DfT cites the increasing difficulty of passing the driving test, the increased cost of lessons and insurance, and more young people being students and therefore having less money as reasons for the decline. Over the same period, the number of drivers aged 70 and over grew from 32 per cent to 47 per cent.

Safety first

Never drive faster than your guardian angel can fly.

Faster

Drivers tend to drive faster when other cars are around. It doesn't matter whether they're in front, behind or beside them.

Back to school for the speed fiends



No one relishes the idea of going back to school but more than a quarter of a million people every year begrudgingly agree to do just that. This is no ordinary school though; this is a driving school – the latest form of education for speeding drivers.

Pilot “speed awareness” courses are being established throughout Britain as an alternative to the usual penalty points and fines. The aim of this is to shame us into slowing down and early results show the idea might well be working.

With seven out of ten British drivers breaking speed limits as a matter of routine, according to official Department of Transport figures, safety campaigners say the traditional fine plus penalty points system is an effective way of boosting Treasury coffers but a hopeless tool for improving road safety.

Fines and points make people grumpy and reinforce the claim that cameras are simply there to collect cash. To “qualify” for a classroom seat you’ll have to have been caught speeding by a camera at no more than 9 mph over the defined limit.

As the attendees collect their name badges and pick a seat in a semicircle, it feels like a session of Anger Management for Speeders Anonymous, the air is thick with resentment. The icebreaker question to each (Why were you exceeding the limit and how did you feel when you got the ticket?) triggers a tide of gripes towards Britain’s camera plagued roads. One man has two advanced driving courses under his belt; a lady in her 60s had driven 90 miles after an emer-

gency with her aged mother. The youngest attendee is about 30, so this is certainly no cross section of hardcore youth offenders.

An informal quiz reveals how badly we remember the Highway Code. Only one person knew the speed limit for cars and motorbikes on a dual carriageway (it's 70mph), what is the criteria for spotting a 30mph limit (a good clue is to look for street lighting) or how you tell the difference between a pedestrian or a Pelican crossing from a distance (look for the lights) The only images shown are pictures of potential driving hazards, in a bid to sharpen perception skills. All the gore is confined to horror statistics. "Anyone know how many fatalities there were in the Hatfield train disaster"? "The answer is four. How many on UK roads every day? Nine. It adds up to a plane crash every month but it doesn't make headlines".

After going through some good practical techniques to watch your speed (such as holding second gear in a 20 mph zone and third in a 30 mph and so on) we look at reaction times and braking distances and move into the many reasons why drivers speed. A list is compiled, alongside another of reasons not to speed. The gut punch lies in the difference between the two: one paints a picture of a driver wrapped up in their concerns and barely aware of the world around them, the other a responsible person aware of their own safety.

You get the feeling that no one is going to be rushing on the way home.

Newspaper article.

A Christmas Cracker.

Q: Who invented the first aeroplane that would ***not*** fly.

A: The Wrong Brothers.

Prize winner

To come second is to be the first of the losers.

The Institute of Advanced Motorists
Wilmslow Advanced Motorists

(IAM No. 5141)

www.w-a-m.info

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The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual contributor and not necessarily those of the Committee or the Institute of Advanced Motorists

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