

Welcome to the summer edition of Bimble, I hope you're all enjoying the better weather and now the schools are off having a slightly easier commute.
This edition we've got some practical advice on packing your bike up for adventure and some words about grip and tyres.

If you've got any comments, suggestions or enquiries about an event or you just want a natter please feel free to contact us at; qualityyorkshireriders@gmail.com or ring 0113 24 75804.
Or you can follow us on Facebook if you're that way inclined.

Handy Links:

http://www.wyam.co.uk/
http://www.yamonline.org.uk/
http://www.bikesafe.co.uk/
http://www.ukmot.com/bike_index.asp
http://sharp.direct.gov.uk/

Dates for the Diary:

South Yorkshire Bikesafe Dates:

August 7th

August 21st

September 4th

September 25th

For more info or to book a place contact Graham Sayner on 0114 220 2996 or

email: graham.sayner@southyorkshire.pnn.police.uk

General:

12th/13th August, Yorkshire Rock & Bike show, Squire's Café.
20th/21st August, West Wales Motorcycle Show, Carmarthen.
2nd – 4th September, MAG's In To the Valley Rally, Bishop Auckland
4th September, National Bikesafe Show, Warwickshire.
10th/11th September, BMF Tailend Show, Lincolnshire Showground.
15th October, Classic Bike Show, Staffordshire
19th – 27th November, Motorcycle Live, NEC, Birmingham

Grip:

It's one of those tangential things that we all understand is important, but most of us don't really understand how it all works. A lot of it is physics and chemistry, none of which I'm going to attempt to go into here. But basically there are two types or layers of grip, indentation and molecular adhesion. Indentation works in both wet and dry conditions and basically involves the deformation of the tyre opposing skidding. Molecular adhesion only really happens in the dry and involves the deformation of the molecules of the tyre producing an effect which opposes skidding.

Yeah, my head hurts too so I'll go back to some more basic things now we've covered the complex bits. Tyres are good at gripping, it's what they do. But they can only do so much of it, even the really good ones. When you're cornering the forces at work are trying to push the bike outwards meaning that you need transverse grip (i.e. across the tyre left / right) where as when you're braking or accelerating you need longitudinal grip (i.e. along the tyre front / back).

Tyres are best when being asked to give one type of grip at a time – either transverse or longitudinal. This means either turning or changing speed, not both at the same time. When you brake the front tyre is pushed into the floor, this increases the contact patch meaning you have more grip the harder you brake. What happens when a rider locks the front in a straight line is usually that they go from no braking force to full force instantly, rather than progressively. The same is true of the rear tyre as you accelerate the rear is pushed down into the tarmac spreading the contact patch and allowing more and more grip to be used for acceleration. However if you rip the throttle open straight away the rear doesn't have time to be pushed down and spread, the maximum available grip is exceeded and the rear tyre spins.

In corners huge amounts of grip are available, even at low temperatures, if the movement toward the edge of the tyre is progressive and not instant. Rolling into the corner rather than just flipping the bike on it's side. Good tyres will give you some warning as they reach the edges of grip too, giving a little slip or wiggle first rather than just letting go completely. Suspension components and other such things also have an input here too, transmitting the messages from the tyres to you via the seat, handlebars and footpegs. It's worth remembering that the closer to the edge you are the more effect your inputs will have which is why slamming the throttle shut when the back steps out induces a high side, where as backing off slightly or holding a steady throttle allows the tyre to achieve grip more gently.

Back to the tyres: the most important thing about getting grip from tyres is what the rider does. The inputs we make and the things we ask of the tyre affect how it responds. The road surface conditions etc are largely secondary. We would all love to ride around on racetrack grade tarmac covering smooth well drained roads but we all know this isn't likely. We have to deal with real roads which are bumpy and pitted and potholed with the occasional manhole cover or diesel spill thrown in for good measure…..and then there's the odd gravel patch too. But, if a tyre loses grip and slides or skids, it's most often because the rider has asked too much of the tyre in the given situation.

The type of tyre you have fitted can make a difference; if you have super sticky sports rubber they wont get warm enough on cool or wet days to offer best levels of grip (just when you could need it most) and even on hot days they may not get used hard enough to get up to optimum temperature. More road orientated tyres, like sports touring types, reach optimum grip at lower temperatures and will work better in the wet. Pressures are important too; under or over inflated tyres will affect grip, wear, handling and fuel consumption. Check 'em regularly while they're cold and stick to what the manufacturer recommends.

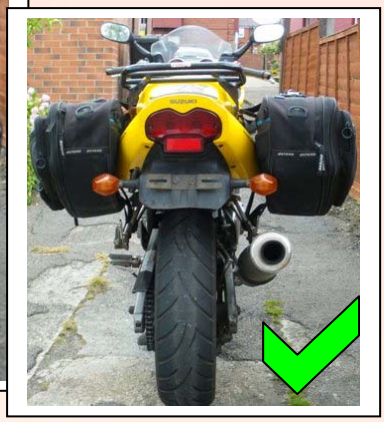
The key thing with tyres is being smooth, especially in adverse conditions. Smooth riders get more grip, this gives them more confidence in their tyres and so they get smoother – it's a positive feedback loop. Being progressive with braking, accelerating and cornering rather than snatching at them and chucking the bike around will give the tyres the best chance of keeping hold of the road. It can also improve tyre life and reduce wear. As well as making you a better, safer rider. Happy Days.

Legal note: minimum legal tread for a motorcycle tyre is 1mm over ¾ of the tyre.

Luggage:

This time of year people are loading up the bike with a few basic essentials and heading off for wild adventure. Not everyone has the luxury of hard luggage and what if you've never strapped all the clean undies you own to a bike before, what's the best way of doing it? And what sort of luggage should you use? Well, here's a brief guide…





Panniers:

- Load them evenly, you can put them on the scales if you want to be precise but you should get a rough idea just by holding them.
- Use straps to secure them too.
- Don't overload them – they can burst.
- Make sure they don't touch the cans.
- Put your clothes in bin bags or liners to ensure they stay dry, most luggage is shower proof but wont withstand 200 miles of torrential rain on the M1.

Tailpacks:

- Use bungees to secure them as well as under seat straps.
- Put your stuff in bin bags or carrier bags to keep them dry.
- If you're leaving the bike somewhere, take your luggage with you or it may not be there when you get back…









Tank Bags:

- Magnetic ones only work if your bike has a metal tank…
- Keep the underside clean to avoid scratches.
- Baglux or similar work best on oddly shaped and plastic tanks.
- Make sure the bag doesn't restrict movement of the bars or view of the clocks.
- Don't be tempted to rest your chin on it on long journeys – falling asleep on a bike is not good…







Luggage racks etc:

- Stuffa-sacks or roll bags are great if you've got a good way of strapping them to the bike.
- The downside is that they can roll about so need to be properly secured.
- Use the smallest you can get away with.
- Don't overload your bike – they do have a maximum load rating to make sure your subframe stays intact.
- The weight of luggage can quickly add up and equal that of a pillion passenger, think about adjusting your suspension and your riding to allow for this.
- Check the bolts holding your rack on are tight before loading.
- Bungees need to be taut to stay in place.







Rucksacks:

- Ok for short journeys and light loads.
- A heavy bag will fatigue you quickly and make your shoulders ache over distance affecting your riding.
- Don't put hard objects in them, like a thermos, if you do come off and land on it it could break your back or ribs. Or both.
- Anything that sticks out will be a pain in the back…

If you're planning on taking a pillion and luggage then plan ahead and be realistic about what you need to take.
Leave enough room for you both to be comfortable.
Refer to your bike's hand book and weigh your luggage, pillion and yourself to make sure you're not exceeding the carrying capacity.
Load the bike up and when you're sat on it get someone to check the chain isn't too tight with the extra weight on, it'll increase wear and possibly snap if it is.
Consider whether you need to alter the tyre pressures to deal with the added weight.
Once you're happy everything is loaded up ok and set off it's worth stopping after a mile or two to make sure nothing's come loose or fallen off etc. Or if there's a few of you in convoy keep an eye on each other to make sure all stays secure.
If the worst happens and you do lose something stop as soon as you can in a safe spot. If you're on the motorway or busy dual carriageway inform the emergency services – **don't** wander into the carriageway to get it. Let the police do it.
It's better to have too many bungees holding things down than not enough.
Check the condition of straps and bungees before and after each use. Replace worn or damaged ones and investigate if it's been rubbing or snagging on the bike somewhere.
You can use gaffer tape to protect your paintwork from rubbing straps etc.
Finally, you are going to have to get it all back on the bike again later when you come home so try and remember how it all fits on! Or buy some hard luggage.