

# On 2 Wheels



Chelmsford & District Advanced Motorcyclists Newsletter **ISSUE 24** SEPT – OCT 2011

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# OUR AIMS

Chelmsford and District Advanced Motorcyclists (CADAM) is one of many groups across the country whose aim is to improve motorcycling road safety by helping people prepare for, and pass, the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) Advanced Motorcycling Test.

Our group is affiliated to, but not subservient to, the IAM. However, because we share the same aims, we often seem to speak with one voice.

CADAM is run by volunteers and serves the districts of Essex in and around Chelmsford. As well as helping people to pass the Advanced Test, we run the group as a club, so that once you have passed, you will still want to stay on and take part in our other activities. We provide:

**Structured instruction** to prepare for the IAM Advanced Motorcycling Test. You can choose a course that runs on Saturdays or one that runs on Sundays. These courses are designed to take even relatively inexperienced riders and raise their riding to IAM test standards.

**Machine control days** to increase your machine handling skills. These sessions are held off the public road, so we can explore your capabilities and those of your machine in safety.

**Social runs** over challenging routes (no motor-ways, thanks!) to interesting places.

**Weekends away** to ride some new roads, normally out of Essex.

**Monthly group meetings**, often with a talk from a speaker on an interesting topic to do with motorcycling.

**On 2 Wheels** This newsletter, keeping you up to date with what's happening.

**Want to know more?** Call our general enquiries number 07790 656 687 – or just turn up at a meeting and introduce yourself to a committee member!

**Future events** listings and directions can be found on the back cover.

When on a club run, be it an evening or a weekend event, speed limits must be observed. We have no exemption and advanced riding does not need to involve higher speeds. When approaching hazards appropriate care must be taken. On clubs runs you are running as CADAM and under the IAM banner. **Do not bring this into disrepute.** Also the Marker system will be used. Anyone not familiar with this system please speak to one of the run organisers who will run through this for you. Thanks and Safe Riding **John Warren**, Chairman, CADAM

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Printed by



M & B Print Solutions Ltd, M&B House,  
Chelmsford Road Industrial Estate,  
Great Dunmow, Essex CM6 1HD  
Tel: 01371 873921 / 01371 877400  
www.mbprint.co.uk

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# Chairman's chatter

Update on the "men's health check". Apparently  
I drink and smoke too much. Quelle surprise!



I was also reliably informed that I am somewhat over weight according to the BMI chart although I prefer to think that I am just too short for my weight. Along with that, just the normal things that come with maturity – slightly high cholesterol and slight enlargement of the prostate.

Joking aside it was well worth the check up.

GC and I went to Essex air ambulance HQ to pass on the £350 proceeds from Jane's memorial ride which was a great result.

Most of the committee attended the EAA motorcycle run and helped out at Harwich on the CADAM stand. We had a great deal of interest and handed out lots of info to prospective new members. Our new banner kindly produced by Steve Allen certainly attracted a lot of attention.

GC has decided that he would like a break from leading his monthly social ride, a task that he has endured for some considerable time. I am sure I speak for all of us in thanking him for all his hard work. Future social rides will be spread out amongst the ride leaders and willing observers which I am sure will lead to a wide variety of rides and destinations.

I have also told the committee that I will be standing down as chairman at the AGM in March. I have completed my three year term as prescribed by IAM HQ and could do with a break. I am quite certain that the current members of the committee will move the group forward and look forward to enjoying all the events on offer as a member.

Next year's calendar of events is well under way and will be added to the events diary on the website as soon as it is complete.

My long suffering wife has booked a week's holiday in mainland Greece for October. I am reliably informed that this will be our first non-motorbike holiday for twenty years! Hum Ho!

See you all on my return.

Ride safe

John



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# Passes

Hearty congratulations to

Associate	Date	Observer
<b>Mike Mortimer</b>	<b>10 September</b>	<b>Gary Crane</b>

and many thanks to all our devoted Observers.

**And please give a warm welcome to our new Associate members:**

James Hillery, Philip Lake, Robert Teatheredge, John Allsopp, David Shindler

Craig Anson and Neil Peacock being presented by our esteemed chairman with their test past certificates. Thanks go to observers Gary Crane and Dennis Kitteridge respectively



## Getting to know you

Things you didn't know about a member?

### Adrian Tadman

**What was your first bike?**

Suzuki X1-50cc moped

**Favourite bike?**

My present bike Kawasaki ZX6R.

Owned for nearly eight years

**Favourite biking road?**

The coast road from lands end to St Ives, really twisty and scenery to die for

**Best ever biking moment?**

Going abroad on bike for first time, Nuremberg last year, even though it was shut when we got there, oh well never mind.

**Favourite food?** Spag bol

**Favourite drink?** Beer, all kinds, not bothered

**Biking hero?** Has to be Rossi.

If only I could ride half as good as him

**Best holiday destination?**

Austrian lakes, went there last year with the wife and kids. I have got to go back there on my bike and ride those roads

**Other interests?**

Trucks, anything mechanical big and noisy, cycling

**Favourite film?**

Has to be the original Terminator film

**Leathers or Goretex?**

Leathers, I think! Can't make my mind up

**Y-fronts, boxers or commando?**

Boxers definitely. Got to give yaself some air

**Favourite celebrity?** Christina

Aguilera, I think that's how you spell it. She is absolutely stunning, and can't half knock out a tune or two

**Scariest biking moment?**

Taking my I.A.M test

**Worst bike ever owned?**

Suzuki X1-50cc moped 37mph flat out on the tank

**Best ever days training?**

All the rides I had with my observer Mick Wills. A really great bloke

**Highlight of your biking career?**

Passing my I.A.M test. No doubt

**Biking must do before you expire?**

As above, go back to Austria on my bike

**Favourite biking accessory**

Has to be my Micron carbon oval end can





I'd posted on the forum and emailed everyone the menu for The Cricketers in Clavering so that they knew that it'd be a bit more than our usual £5 stop for food. As it's a busy gastro pub (famed for being the place where Jamie Oliver grew up and is still owned and run by his parents) we would have to book. I reserved a table for 10 even though only 8 signed up for definite on the forum, this turned out to be a cunning plan as

# LBW Pillion

## (Lazy Bar Walkers)

Sunday 28th August dawned with fantastic sunshine about six hours before we all met at Boreham McDonald's. I was determined that this was to be a relaxed day...



Gary Reeve and his significant other turned up. Alan Plant threatened to turn up, but his Triumph magically knew that there wasn't enough room and refused to take him there.

After a brief getting to know you session where the pillions got to know each other, we took a leisurely and picturesque route via Finchingfield to the village of Clavering. The roads were very peaceful because the forecast was wet and the superbikes were playing at Brands Hatch. Just before Clavering, we were getting too hot, so the biblical shower only served to cool us down.

If you have never been to The Cricketers, it is a very old building and they've kindly padded the low beams. It is split into two parts, the restaurant and the bar. Service is never rushed, giving us the time to enjoy our meals. Charlotte and I have been a few times before and have even stayed there twice so that we didn't have to drive.

As you'd expect, the food is local, in season and good. The meal always start with an appetizer of fresh bread, balsamic vinegar and oil. I chose the well aged local rib eye steak and Charlotte had a pie. My steak was melt in your mouth tender and Charlotte said that it was the best pastry and pie she had ever tasted. It should be as the chef makes each one fresh and we were warned that the pie would be 30 minutes. The pillions made the most of the wine list and I had to indulge in a small glass of red to go with my steak. At this point Jonathan





# group ride

## to The Cricketers in Clavering

whipped his camera out and I thought that he may be taking photographic evidence as the waitress had poured a large glass by accident.

The company, as always with CADAM runs was perfect and we had a few laughs and a very restful 3 hours at the table. We split the bill 10 ways to aid simplicity and it worked out around £25 per head, which I thought was very reasonable. Craig moaned a bit as he'd just spent

£17k on a new BMW. We said our goodbyes in the car park as some were going on or splitting off of the route home and Charlotte and I got home in time to get back to our usual hectic routine of taxi drivers, washers, ironers, cleaners and chef to three children.

I know that £25 a head may seem indulgent for a group ride out, but I'd do it again as it's something that the pillions enjoyed.



### A fitting tribute for Jane

Gary and John went to Essex Air Ambulance HQ to present Wendy Marcon, EAA's Events Manager the £350 proceeds collected on Jane's memorial ride.

Several bikes pass us in the opposite direction, bristling with luggage and holiday left over's. Heads down their pilots wear fatigue, their adventure almost at the end of the final page. Feeling smug, we turn towards Euro Tunnel and the first chapter.

Euro Tunnel greets us with cloths of discarded coffee cups and the remains of fast food. Not a clean table in sight and underfoot, my boots stick to grime. It gets worse, as am

says on the tin and today is virtually empty. Where is everyone?

First sign of life is the nose of a white car just visible, jutting out from behind the concrete support of an over bridge. Is a plainly wrapped Focus estate minus wheel trims. A laser device sprouts from the passenger window. The big GS, not being the bye word in performance motor-cycling means they're going to have to wait a little longer...

Three Virgin hot air balloons hang motionless like red painted hardboiled eggs with a dash of Tabasco, high above. This is the M20 in early July. It's early doors and for a change, the canopy above is summer blue...

## ADVENTURE BY ADVENTURE

# A vanishing road

forced to ask for a cloth to clean a deserted table. Not the greatest start to a two week tour of some of the best scenes of Europe – and this is not one of them. A reminder that we need to do much better.

Things improve when they call our train. Corinne points out another rider aboard a new K1600GTL. Seems smitten with the GS Adventure. He circles it like a vulture waiting to feed. We board our train in search of two wheeled nirvana.

The summer blue canopy of England extends to France as we trace a path to Strasbourg, as laid out by Garmin. We need to cover big miles so need a big stretch of concrete. The A26 maybe for truckers, but the A26 does what it

As we near Reims, looking above white clouds have arrived in the shape of love hearts. A real camera moment, but not this day.

One flaw with the Adventure shows its hand on empty roads like these. Cruise control is no big deal on the M25, but empty runways like this...

Another toll beckons as does our first 'nervous' moment. Things feel more like a circus act as I wrestle with the fully laden Adventure whilst Corinne attempts to stand on the pegs to reach up and take the ticket.

With the second generation ESA damping set to 'comfort' we ride the A4 as it banks and glides towards Germany. Below in the engine room, the boxer twin hums in search of home.





The A4 is more interesting. It has more twist and bite to it. Large tiles on the embankments change colour in the sun and the remains of a Partisan 80's disco in the shape of rotating silver globes hang near side.

Ahead, a new horizon wearing dark green camouflage takes shape and can be seen dancing about on top edge of the big GS screen. As we get closer our new found friend claws skywards as the Black Forest comes to the fore.

Afternoon is overtaken by evening and time to find somewhere to hide up. Garmin is bursting with hotels as I work through the menus. Some with fancy names like 'Hilton' and not so fancy 'Formula One'. Middle ground is chosen and a buffet dinner and comfortable nights sleep are a given at a Campanile hotel.

Its early. Yet the sun was up long ago and is back from the gym for you can feel its strength. We repack with precision to keep the centre of gravity where it should be and where I need it to be. The Adventure is 223kg dry. Max permissible weight is 475kg. I don't need to be on the move to tell we are heavy. I have a 'low' Sergeant seat and with the ESA at the correct preload thus increasing the ride height further; this is the first time I can get both feet almost flat on deck. With that fuel browser in front on a full stomach, I imagine we are well over 400kgs and at walking pace the Adventure shakes her head in agreement. A smidge more throttle and the helm is regained.

Garmin steers us towards Baden-Baden and the B500. It takes us to a straight road. A very straight road, paved with thick pine and packed with tall Christmas trees from one horizon to the next. This must be the longest and straightest

piece of asphalt I have ridden. We stop and I stand in the middle of the road. I look at my watch and note several minutes have passed, yet nothing but silence drizzled with the scent of pine passes my senses.

Baden-Baden is just a coffee stop in the mirrors as we climb the B500. The B500 rocks and rolls through the Black Forest like a mythical serpent with red and white markings indicating not the strength of her poison, but the severity of her coils. The smell of pine thick on her forked breath. Care is needed on right hander's with restricted views as opposing riders seem to enjoy cutting their corners.

We turn off the B500 and am stuck behind a German 5 series. The narrow road swoops left and right with short straights and restricted views. Patients is the name of the game, for we are not as lithe or as strong in the boiler room as an S1000RR. Road sign denotes we have entered another unpronounceable (but pretty) town dressed in the norm 50 kmh limit. Soon this picturesque place is cleared and the 5 series is dispatched in similar fashion. The twin cam boxer engine maybe short on horsepower compared to what BMW have achieved (read HP2 Sport) but there is a smidge more in the mid range to be enjoyed at every opportunity.

An amazing roller coaster with decent zig zags its way to the valley bottom. Two stabs of the ESA button and 'sport' is confirmed by the display, helping to keep things more ship shape. The Akrapovic soundtrack fizzes and pops in the background each time I close the throttle and let the pistons do the braking. Corinne is giggling in the intercom.

The pipe cleaner crash barrier on the near



side installs little faith as the sheer drop is just that. We thread around another tight hairpin, most are first gear, disturbing a bird of prey. Its massive wingspan casting a shadow over our heads as it glides down to the valley floor.

We stop at a biker hotel for coffee. The owner spots my Michelin map and points out the best roads in the Black Forest in good English. Sadly time is against us and we need to set course for Lake Constance.

Evening beckons as does the vast turquoise waters of Lake Constance. Here craft of all kinds can be seen resting on tranquillity. Up above a different kind of craft can be seen meandering along. Its silver cigar shape unmistakably Zeppelin.

A deal is done and a roof over our heads found at Meersburg. The hotel is straight from the 60's, a throwback from the cold war and a Bond flick. A town very colourful, packed with character, history, ice cream and cuckoo clocks is this. The water front is straight from the Med, glittering in the basking sun of evening. Its heaving. The many cold Swiss faces of chiselled mountains can be seen sleeping, across the blue water.

Its morning rush hour. Lake Constance is rammed. We make our way to the ring road only to be thwarted by road works and carriageway closures. We are in a slow moving traffic. The pilot of an opposing black VW Golf looks our way – and drives straight into the back of the car in front!

We crack the Austrian border, stop for fuel, coffee and collect a vignette for 7 Euros. We then reach Alpine meadow after Alpine meadow, chocolate box houses decorated with window boxes that have exploded in vivid colour, perched on the hillside with cow bells tingling all around. The grass here is a different shade of green. The smell of freshly cut grass sprinkled in sugar hovers in the air. The air quality here is just so different.

Progress is slowed by 2 cows meandering along the middle of the road in a small hamlet. Vehicles skim past either side of their leather coats as if business as usual. Here it is. The cows reach a farm they call home.

We ride a pass and find road works. On a descent the road stops and becomes gravel, rocks and ballast. A couple in front on matching red motorcycles, one from Germany the other Japan, look uncomfortable as they cross this rough and unfriendly face. I have to rein in the big GS, for its situation normal.

The Deutsche Alpenstrasse or German Alpine Road, leads the way towards Garmisch. The sound of a screaming can fills the Bavarian air. Mirrors show a red Golf behind. The mechanical metallic scream gets louder, another mirror check reveals a crash helmet bobbing about behind the Golf like a buoy out at sea. A plastic crotch rocket with screaming lungs and drama written all over it flashes past – and everything is fine and calm again.

As we get closer to Garmisch we are huffed

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by a black Ferrari 550. Any further joviality short changed by a column of vehicles, minimal gaps and a solid white line. Should have bought a GS.

Perched above the big GS, we ride into Garmisch and the Alps. Here, the aura and closeness of rugged, twisted mountain peaks tainted in the oranges of evening sun are enough to wake up the hairs on the back of the neck.

I consult Garmin and are directed to a nearby hotel. €170 for the night. Corinne tries the B&B next door. Sold for €80.

The warm evening and scenic backdrop that is Garmisch dictates that we eat el fresco. Pizza Hut it is and we absorb the local scene whilst waiting, waiting and waiting for food. A white Aston Martin Vantage, roof down passes by. Mobile phone clued to ear. (Guess certain things remain the same wherever you are). A male walks past with the slogan: 'Bikers Airbag' printed on the front of his T shirt, with an arrow pointing down to his over flowing belly. A Jeremy Clarkson home made camper van in different shade of ply, stuck to the back of a Toyota Hilux with glue, is next to catch my gaze; as is a lady who should invest in a bra. A symphony like no other is then played from the quartet of pipes that is the MV Augusta. It is gone just as soon as it appeared.

We eventually eat whilst admiring two brightly coloured paragliders, floating around in circles like eager fireflies, against the great towering wall of ashen paper mashey that is the Alps, with its continuing changing shades of grey as passing clouds embrace its many expressions.

Its 0800 in Garmisch. The morning rush to you and me. Yet from our balcony all that can be heard are the signatures of church bells and bird song. Grey clouds hang off the Alps. The weather forecast threatens thunderstorms.

We ride back into Austria, having set course for the Grossglockner. The Grossglockner at 3,798m above sea level is the tallest mountain in Austria and one of the highest peaks in the Alps. On route, lakes, blue lagoons, pine forests, vast timber yards, stunning towns and villages, steep passes, waterfalls and the smell of smoke and soot from hungry steam engines are just

some of the days flavours. They need to be savoured, not rushed. So here, suspension is set to 'comfort' and let the torque of the big GS do the talking.

Its a hot one too. The display says 28. We arrive at the Grossglockner late afternoon. We present our passes and wave good bye to the tolls. The Grossglockner takes us high into the clouds. Corinne is feeling uncomfortable and cannot look down at the amazing vista laid out below us like a giant table cloth. The absence of crash barrier not helping her fears and the shortest route to the Gates of St Peter, just a mistake away. The road like us, clings to the side of the mountain. An open hairpin suddenly appears and we take a slower vehicle on the inside before using the wide bars as leverage to get us around the next one.

Here at the top you have almost 270°of panoramic view to gorge and digest. No matter how hard you try, you just cannot eat it all. Even after several sittings, you still wont manage this vast platter. The wind is blowing well, and are thankful for the cooler temperature.

The decent carries an equal thrill rating. Added drama comes in the form of tunnels with no lighting other than that afforded by mother nature and that thrown forward by the big GS. Sadly this is not a lot and one of the few black marks for the big fella.

Mist rises off the road as the warmed tarmac meets heavy rain which strikes the ground only to bounce straight back. We are enveloped in the wet stuff until we reach ground level. Rain has locked onto us, hitting the on/off switch until we finally arrive at Gasthof Hochalm Spitze in Malta, Carinthia and our Austrian retreat for the next 7 days.

It's a hot one. The display shows 32 and the suns rays claw through my jacket in search of virgin white flesh. Flip top open just to breath. Having visited the Porsche museum down the road in Gmund, we need higher ground. That's where coolness hangs out. Flashing our passes at the tolls to the Malta National Parks and we're in. Hugging the mountain road the temperature starts to drop to more comfortable levels. Hairpin after hairpin past waterfalls of





foaming crystal and glass, leads to a single track road controlled by a traffic light and digital egg timer – and we have a 21 minutes to wait! With less than a minute to go we are scrabbling up this mountain ledge. We ride through an amazing network of tunnels untouched by hand since birth. No lighting or fancy panelling here. The dim and chilling light reveals a lunar landscape of rock above our heads as we ride through this giant toilet roll. Even at this low measure of momentum, a hairpin bend suddenly throws itself from within, focusing ones mind and backside...

Through another tunnel, a quick squirt between more hairy bends and arrival at a phenomenon only previously known to Gerry Anderson. We have found International Rescue and Tracy Island. It exists and the rotund hide-away can be found protecting Austria's highest dam, at the end of the Malta Hochalmstrasse.

Garmin navigates whilst the big GS glides along the valley floor in chase of another trip highlight: Berchtesgaden and the Eagles Nest. The speedo states we wont win any prizes, but the tank range to empty declares we might; after a refill with 423 miles remaining. Its getting uncomfortable as another prod of the button displays 33°. We ride a long cotton thread between a vast rich green pine forest and a mountain range of giant walnut whips sprinkled with icing sugar. Between the trees we glimpse an imposing castle on a rocky outcrop and back in 68 this was 'Where Eagles Dare'.

Destination reached, a red coach delivers us the final 4 mile accent to the base of the Eagles Nest. We walk the walk that Hitler walked on occasions, through the mountain tunnel to that ornate golden lift. We are packed into said

conveyance and the attendant closes the doors. Half way up inside the mountain, the original lift telephone starts ringing. The man himself? The lift deposits us at the top, the Kehlsteinhaus. Now a restaurant.

Up here only a photograph has any chance of describing the panoramic mirage laid out around us. A smidge from closing time, we find the Museum. A chilling and explicit place, with access to Hitler's secret bunkers under what was once his garrison – left in their original and unfinished state.

Thunder has shown its hand during the afternoon. As boarding the big GS, its lashing down. The car park starts to flood and a couple next to us on a yellow 1150GS ride off road seeking shelter under a tree. Leaving the car park via a mostly submerged roundabout we meet a English registered 5 series showing 'not sure' symptoms of 'what to do' or 'where to go'. Not the time or place, so a prod of horn note and we row pass.

A 34° day and we appear to be in 'no mans land'. The border sign behind us states: Austria, the border sign in front of the big GS: Slovenia. So where are we exactly? Border post is deserted, as if left behind by a retreating army. The moment Austria becomes Slovenia Garmin goes blank and declares there are no roads here.





Thankfully our hosts at Gasthof Hochalm-  
spitze had fed Garmin with most of the tours.  
So the Three Countries Tour was just a nervous  
reboot away. Garmin re awakes but shows little  
vigour with just a single purple trace for us to  
follow and navigation is now a tricky manual  
affair, trying to keep the GS on the purple road.

The climb up this pass is suffocating and  
takes our breath away, as does the scene all  
around. Lumps in throat are common place, as  
the climb accompanied by the views of what's  
coming down; are chokingly restrictive. The  
road runs out at each hairpin. The surface of  
each individual hairpin replaced and painted in  
cobblestones – marbles in the wet. Then there's  
the steep camber... we gingerly reach summit  
and calm is restored, yet nowhere left to park to  
inhale our fairytale surroundings.

The decent is equally captivating with 30  
numbered hairpins. A small section of opposite  
carriageway is fenced off for there is a hole.  
Not a pot hole, but a hole you can stare through  
in horror to the valley floor and large enough  
to swallow a small scooter. Garmin is suffering  
from intergestion, for the purple road is no more.  
Route re loaded and all is fine for all of 50m,  
then more hiccups and a blank screen. The  
Julian Alps behind us, we cross another derelict  
border post into Italy. Past an ancient Fort

peppered in machine gun fire. Another tight  
decent with a shimmering blue lake to take  
your mind off what happens should you get  
close and personal with the edge...

A few clicks short of the Austrian border we  
ride through a time warp. We are back in 1945  
and the war has just ended. We pass what was  
once an old goods train marshalling yard.  
Overgrown, yet complete with some station  
remains and rows of old buildings with broken  
windows and cobwebbed laced sills, untouched  
by loving hand since the end of said hostilities.

Another border post from a forgotten era  
passes by and once re united with Austria,  
Garmin is back to health.

They say the simple pleasures in life are the  
best. Armed with the big GS we discover things  
don't get much better than the Nockalmstrasse.  
The Nockalmstrasse is all hairpins and nature.  
Located in the Nockberge National Park,  
between toll booths are 52 individually  
numbered hairpins rammed into 34km of  
ballistic scenery. When the sun shines, the eagle  
eyed may also spot tons of blue glitter dumped  
lake shape and the odd rustic house and hut.  
The road surface is manicured to perfection and  
painted in that fabulous colour called adhesion.  
Having swallowed a couple of lumbering camper  
vans to the accompaniment of pop perfection  
from the Akrapovic, good use is made of the  
wide bars to pole volt the not so straight bits.  
We reach the summit and are greeted by an  
Oompa band. We park next an 80's icon – a red  
CX500 Eurosport (in very good nick), dump our  
bike gear in 'bike lockers' (why don't we have  
these back home?) and enjoy lunch in the  
restaurant marvelling at this hidden jewel.

Its 1030 and we are riding through an oven.  
The suns rays bounce off the valley floor and

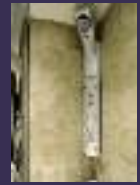


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we are engulfed in the accompanying haze that is heat. The display shows 35 degrees and raise flip tops just to breath. Higher ground is a must, so Garmin sets course for the Villach Alpenstrasse. We dispense wider, quicker roads as more pace equals more breeze. The Villach Alpenstrasse is a 16.5km road with aerial views of Austria, Slovenia and Italy. The Alpine road rises to 1,732m where it rests at the base of its summit. At 2,167m the summit can only be reached by shankis pony. We park, deposit our gear (more bike lockers) and applaud the cooler temperatures and the 270° kaleidoscope views across the three horizons.

A new day has come and with it 36° of burning heat just for fun. Austria is now several hours behind us as Garmin leads us and another couple on a 1250 Bandit, along the A8 autobahn towards France and Colmar.

Overhead gantries give early heads up of lanes 2, 3 and 4 closures ahead. We find ourselves in a vacuum of heat as everyone attempts to funnel into the remaining lane. We are next to an artic who has turned the thermostat up even higher, a tsunami of dry heat pushes against; and over us from the dustbin sized exhaust. A siren suddenly comes into earshot and a Police van is through the sea of parted metal. The German authorities take displeasure in filtering, so we follow in the bow wave of the Police van and hope they have more urgent matters to contend with. The Police van then comes to a halt at the scene of twisted crash barrier that resembles a wilted chocolate curly whirly and several bent vehicles. Thankfully nobody seems hurt as airbags appear to have saved the day.



Garmin is the first to wilt in this horrendous heat as mapping goes blank. Garmin reappears further into the journey and is stuck in re calculating mode. Having manually re selected the route Garmin directs us off, only to re join the same autobahn at the next junction. Then for fun we are lead on a merry dance back the way we have just come.

We consult maps and follow the heavily laden Bandit, Baden-Baden and Freiburg. The sky above is dark and angry. Day has turned into an early night. A bolt of lightening tinged in pink ricochets from the belly of the clouds and strikes the foreground. An ear splitting 'crack' above our heads and my visor is awash. We take the next exit off. The rain is lashing down and visibility is a problem.

We await a green signal at traffic lights and in the cooler temperatures decide to give Garmin another chance. Lights change and we move off, the pack horse Bandit following. The roads have given up and we are riding through a river. Around a left hand bend the horizon has disappeared and 15m in front the road just





vanishes. The road was there, then suddenly it isn't. The road sucked away in the vacuum of rain and storm. Mirror check and can just make out the headlamp of the Bandit close behind. All is not well as they are showing a right indicator. We pull off the road, through a width restriction into the flooded car park of a garden centre. Here we take shelter and watch the water as it laps up against the doorsills of parked cars. The rain stops as soon as it started, yet everything has new meaning. Mud has been washed from fields and now drapes over our path ahead. Branches have fallen and leaves have met an early grave stuck to tarmac.

We reach Colmar and our hotel. Here we spend an evening of feasting in the glassed restaurant surrounded by an even more powerful electrical storm. The spectacle and strength of nature's orchestral light show, continually diluting the night sky into clouds of white, pink and purple. Lightning strikes are relentlessly thrown to the ground, some linger almost turning night back into day; whilst sonic shock waves gyrate the night away.

A day off the big GS is spent exploring Colmar under rain soaked cloud. Its narrow water ways and houses decorated in an ensile of vivid water colour, unlike the monotone rain which does its best to spoil such a colourful place.

The first leg of the final return journey sees us heading for Reims. The Ballons des Vosges are under an umbrella of early morning mist. My skin complains of the cold and the display shows just 7°. What a difference a day makes – 29° in fact!

We make Reims in good time, such is the deep chested touring breadth of the big GS. It covers miles with such consummate ease. Each one individually absorbed in the same fashion as the ESA irons out each crease



beneath its wheels. So much so, that the sign for St Quentin is behind us and Aarass before us. No sooner is another tank of fuel gulped down than we find ourselves on board a train for home. An hour later the garage door closes not only on the Adventure, but an adventure.

### **The out takes...**

Had two premature changes of underwear – on both occasions the rear tyre lost adhesion and tango'd east to west on a right hand bend and west to east on a left hander. The culprit? On both occasions less than a 1" wide section of tar banding reduced to runny wax by the sun. Very nearly felled the big GS. Twice.

Whilst eating lunch on the balcony of the restaurant on the tip of the Villach Alpenstrasse, a freak gust of wind (not mine) uplifted one of the large parasols from its base. It flew above the tables and as it turned end on, struck my right eye. Thankfully a cheap pair of sunglasses saved my sight, but was left with a bloody cut above the eye. A reminder that there is no such thing as cheap sunglasses!

The heat. In full riding gear it was the best part of unbearable on some days.

### **The best bits...**

The people we met, ate and drank with. English, Welsh, Scottish, Dutch and a 19 stone 7' tall German farmer called Godfrey. A dancing God by all accounts. Does not like the Multistrada, wants an Adventure. So he knows his mustard too.

The widescreen 3D panoramic scenes, sounds, air quality and thunderstorms the UK just cannot deliver.

### **Thanks to:**

Ross & John at Gasthof Hochalmspitze. Their fine cuisine, comfortable beds and local knowledge.

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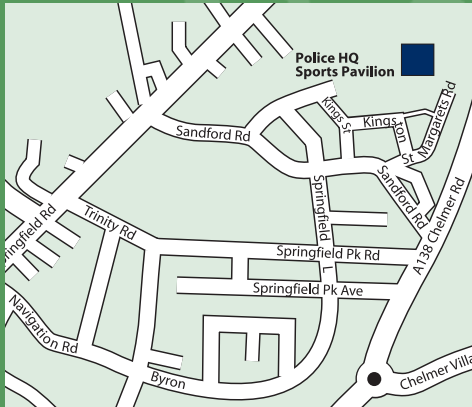
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Vange, Basildon,  
Essex S516 5JT

**07860 558524**  
**01268 581789**

*Phone me for any help or advice*



# HOW TO FIND US



## Club Nights

The Sports Pavilion  
 Chelmsford Police HQ, St. Margaret's Road.  
 7.30pm for 8pm start unless stated otherwise.  
 Please refer to CADAM events panel for dates.  
 Apologies, but we will need to collect £1.00  
 subs from each member present on club  
 nights to cover the cost of hiring the hall.  
 Guest speakers and the occasional raffle are  
 being planned for some of the evening  
 meetings. For more details or suggestions  
 for future events, including speakers, please  
 contact any of the committee. Thank you  
 and we look forward seeing you soon.

# CADAM events 2011

Visit the Forum and Events Calendar on [www.cadam.org](http://www.cadam.org) for more details on all of the events listed. Check regularly as events are regularly added or amended. We look forward to seeing you on a ride out soon

October	
Tues 11th	Group night. Tye Boughen will be doing a roadcraft talk... you might well learn something EPSA .....7:30pm
Sun 16th	Keith Dunn's Air base visit – see forum "what's on" section Boreham McDonald's .....9am
Sun 30th	Chairman's Ride-out ..... Boreham McDonald's .....9am

November 2011	
Mon 7th	Committee meeting EPSA 19:30
Tues 8th	Group night Roadcraft EPSA .....7:30pm
Sun 13th	The Spectacular John Stevens Ride-out. Where will he go, what will he do; See the next exciting installment! Bring an overnight bag and clean underwear, LOL) Boreham McDonald's .....9am
Sun 27th	Mavis's Ride-out Boreham McDonald's .....9am



December 2011	
Fri 2nd	<b>Cadam's Christmas Party.</b> This is a new date for this! Fish & chips will be available! EPSA .....TBA
Fri 16th	Cadam's Christmas meal Mick Gowlett has arranged our Christmas dinner at the Old Dog Herongate. See forum for details
Sun 18th	Ride -out. Ride leader TBA Boreham McDonald's .....9am
Mon 19th	Committee meeting EPSA .....7:30pm