



December 2015

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## A word from IAM President

### Season's greetings

Well, the nice weather is upon us and I am out there riding as much as I can. I'm feeling rather proud of myself for recently qualifying as an observer. It doesn't seem that long ago that I was watching the lines of some of our advanced riders and wondering how I was going to do that!

As many of you know, road safety has been a big part of my life for the last decade, and moving from Police, Regional Manager in the New Zealand Transport Agency and currently, as Senior Injury Prevention Programme Manager for ACC for Motorcycle Safety has helped with that focus. I am also on the National Road safety Leadership Group, part of the Safer Journeys Action Plan core group, and have the lead for motorcycle safety for the Transport Agency.

As I write this on 7th December, the road toll is now 293, versus 271 at the same time last year. Of this number, there's 47 motorcycle riders and 5 billion passengers killed, versus 39 riders and one billion last year. It's looking bad for motorcycling this year, with a likely motorcyclist death toll around the 50 mark. The last time we were at those sort of numbers was in the late 1990s. I don't have the data yet on injuries, but I expect a proportional increase. What isn't clear yet is if that motorcycling is getting more risky: the bike shops are booming from what I can see, the instructors are busy, and unfortunately, history tells us that the numbers killed and injured parallel the numbers of registered bikes. More riders = more risk.

There's a lot of work going on at the moment between ACC, the Motorcycle Safety Advisory

Council (MSAC); NZTA and Police to look at how we can collectively have an impact on the deaths and injuries occurring. I'm pleased to be an integral part of this and I'm really pleased to see the massive hike in focus from ACC about how to help keep riders safer.

What I am seeing time and time again, however, is poor decision-making and poor skill by riders, along with some downright bad behaviours. As a Wellingtonian, I am regularly riding and driving over the Rimutakas, a favourite for riders, only to see rider after rider overtaking on double yellow lines, often at high speeds, and often using poor cornering lines with helmets perilously close to oncoming traffic. Each day on my morning commute there's riders creating a third lane at fairly high speed in relation to other traffic. And all of these riders are seen by the public who tar us all with the same brush.

Ultimately, as motorcyclists, we have a real image issue. We have looked jealously at the \$300M going into cycling, but unless as a motorcycling community we start to see better behaviours, the public will be calling for more regulation, we will continue to see tragedies involving motorcyclists, and we will continue to be seen as the authors of our own misfortune. Hard to get sympathy!

So this is where we come in as IAM. It's easy to see the safety problem as too big, but every change comes one step at a time, and continuing to promote the system for bikes and cars and setting the example for others is important. And for me, that means riding the system at all times: not just on IAM rides, but living and breathing it.

Sometimes its little things: I have recently spoken to a national Ulysses workshop and talked about how what we tolerate sets the culture. Ultimately, the larger bike groups do have an influence on the culture of those around us – even if it's one individual at a time. I have recently had the chance to go and talk to the Wellington group of the BMW Owners Register, and recently helped host a presentation for BRONZ at the Joint Traffic Operations Centre in Johnsonville: all of those an opportunity to promote safer riding and a greater spirit of cooperation.

I am really pleased to see the progress IAM are making, particularly in the motorcycle space, with more observers coming on board. This weekend I am off with a few other Wellington Regional members to help with some training of the rapidly growing Nelson group. It's a great opportunity to make some new friends and ride in some of the most beautiful parts in the country!

Something I am really keen on seeing across all of our divisions is sustainable growth. It's all too easy to over-promise and under-deliver as there's far more demand than we can cope with for now. I'm really wanting to see us grow in a way that allows us to keep our high standards and be progressively more influential. And sometimes that just takes a bit of time to ensure that the people we are training aren't just riding (or driving) the system because they are being observed: it's part of the way we do things around here. Keeping an eye out for folk who will help build our observer base is an important focal area.

In closing, have a fantastic break. If you are riding or driving, avoid travelling on those peak periods where you are sharing the road with a bunch of tired people who are thinking about everything

**Carey Griffiths.**

President.

IAM NZ.



## Motorcar Division

### Prevention on the cards

In October 2015, New Zealand Police launched a new initiative to educate offending drivers that their driving could present risks and could see them having their licence suspended. Cards are handed to drivers who were issued with an Infringement Notice for offences that carry demerit points. With the Rugby World Cup at the front of many minds the message is being delivered through use of a universally understood sporting symbol.

“With the Rugby World Cup in full swing, people understand what a yellow card means,” says Superintendent Steve Greally, National Manager Road Policing.

“They’re a reminder to people that their driving behaviour is risky and they might be approaching their demerit limit. Everyone knows what a yellow card is and the consequences of receiving one.”

The project reflects recognition that enforcement alone can only go so far – the yellow card gives police staff the opportunity to talk prevention at the roadside.

“The yellow card isn’t a substitution for an infringement notice – it’s to be handed over with the notice, not instead of one,” says Steve.

“Staff can use it to start a conversation with a driver about the road safety risks of their actions and what suspension of their licence would mean in terms of employment, education and recreation to them and their family members.

“A few extra minutes at the roadside is time well spent if you can influence changes in a driver’s behaviour and their attitude to road safety.

“When you interact with someone at the roadside, you don’t just say ‘Here’s your ticket’

and walk away. You’ve got their attention – it’s an opportunity to give them a message about prevention and changing behaviour.”

Though the initiative was timed to coincide with the Rugby World Cup, staff can continue to use the cards after the tournament.

The scheme is another interesting initiative from the Police to try and educate drivers to become more aware of the error of their ways. They are to be applauded for the approach trying to educate. It seems to miss the mark though. It should be education or enforcement, not both at the same time. The problem is where an officer considers that the driving is so bad that an infringement needs to be issued, they have surely passed the point where that officer has considered using discretion to give a warning, have a discussion about safety and thereby educate the driver.

Shortly after the initiative started, the Labour Weekend holiday occurred. 5 deaths this year from 5 fatal crashes, compared with 3 deaths from 3 crashes in 2014 and 1 fatality in 2013 (the lowest Labour Weekend road toll since records began).

As a somewhat legendary (now retired) Senior Sergeant in the central north Island once said, “You can’t fix Stupid!” Recognition that there are road users who will benefit from some stern but wise words of advice, and those that simply need to be prosecuted. If an officer decides the latter – why waste valuable time on the former with that same person.

We are now halfway through the timeframe for the Long term Government road safety plan, “Safer Journeys 2020”; the ten year initiative to significantly reduce the road toll. Whilst the total

deaths in 2014 were 294, compared to 375 in 2010, the number has hovered around the 300 mark for most of those years. The exception being 2013 when an impressive 253 were killed. It's sad that we find 253 deaths to be a cause for congratulation though. Unfortunately, since then the numbers have risen and at 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015 the death toll stands at 287. We look likely to be in excess of 300 this year, given that December sees between 23 and 39 people killed (2010 – 2014).

A lot of time and effort is being put into reducing the number of road deaths. Yet there seems to be no sustainable reduction.

What is missing?

The current holistic approach to road safety in NZ is a four pronged attack. "Safe Roads, Safer Vehicles, Safer Drivers, Safer Speeds". It's an adaptation of the older "3 E's" (Education, Engineering and Enforcement).

KiwiRAP (Kiwi Road Assessment Program) deals with the roads. Roads are graded on a 5 star system similar to the ANCAP rating for new cars. Where a road is graded 1 star, high risk, measures are urgently taken to remedy the engineering of the road. The approach recognises that humans are fallible and make mistakes. The aim is to design the road to allow for this and remove any "error enforcing conditions". E.g. a power pole close to the edge of the tar seal. This makes the chances of surviving a mistake greater. You may have seen widening work taking place on narrower roads. No additional lane width is created but a wider area of sealed surface at the edge of the road is made to help a driver recover control if necessary.

Safer vehicles are of course covered by the ANCAP safety rating which encourages manufacturers to produce safer cars. Again this accepts the fallibility of the driver and protects occupants in the event of a collision. The opposing school of thought here is that all safety devices should be removed from cars (including seat belts and airbags etc) and replaced with a single 6 inch long very sharp spike positioned directly in front of the driver's forehead. This now

invests the driver in the result of any crash and concentrates the mind on getting everything right. In theory this is an excellent concept. Those that do not adapt their driving, will soon prove Darwinian Theory and remove themselves from the gene pool. Initially increased death tolls should soon fall significantly.

Then comes Safer Drivers and Safer Speeds. This is something of a duplication. If you have safer drivers, then they should be travelling at safer speeds, surely?

Other countries who have adopted this approach do not have the "Safer Speeds" element in their approach. New Zealand does, as there is an unhealthy fixation on speed as a cause of road deaths.

It is not so simple. Speed is not the cause of any crash. It is speed that is too great for the existing circumstances that causes the crash. Boiling this down, to root cause, means that the driver is the cause because the driver made the decision to travel at a speed that was unsafe in the prevailing conditions.

When one examines the NZTA statistics the top causes of crashes every year are driver error. They appear in different guises such as "lost control", "Too fast for conditions", "Driver tired or fell asleep", "failed to keep left" and so on.

So what is being done about educating the driver? This is the point that is being neglected. Not entirely of course. There are efforts being made but rather late in the piece.

The new "tougher" driving tests introduced in 2012 are still not as tough as the UK for example. However it is a good step and is already seeing fewer crashes from drivers in the 16-19 age group. But where is the compulsory professional driver education? It was backed away from because rural NZ does not have good access to professional driver training. This is a chicken and egg situation. Create the demand and the driving schools will appear! The young driver needs to be taught from the very beginning how to scan, anticipate and plan for things to go wrong. It is a life skill, quite literally.

The new Health and Safety At Work Act 2015, which received Royal Assent in September specifically identifies a vehicle as a workplace to which the Act applies. This will force drivers of work vehicles to be trained in the safe use of the workplace. A similar approach in the UK by the Health and Safety Executive (UK equivalent of WorksafeNZ) in the mid 1990's started a rapid reduction in the road death toll there and quickly dropped the total by around 1000 per year, (Roughly equivalent to 100 per year in NZ terms).

There is no encouragement to better yourself as a driver once you have a full licence. Organisations like the I.A.M. exist to improve driver skills and safety. Yet the government do little to promote the existence of such organisations. We have all encountered advertising flyers accompanying a vehicle registration reminder telling us of excellent road safety initiatives such as buying a personalised plate and being able to renew your "rego" online. This could be an effective means of promoting a chance to improve driver skill levels. Pressure on insurance companies to provide discounts to those who have passed and Advanced Driving Test would be incentive; as would a reduction in the ACC levy portion of the vehicle Registration.

## Strange European driving laws

When you head to Europe on your OE, or even just on holiday, it pays to know some of the strange driving rules that you'll encounter which are different to New Zealand's. They were useful for us when we recently drove in Iceland and the UK.

### Albania

The maximum blood alcohol level is 0.01%, which means that you might as well not drink. It's compulsory to carry a first-aid kit, presumably because many of the cars are so old and rubbish that you'll burn your hands in the engine bay trying to get them restarted.

### Austria

A sign showing a bugle (like a trumpet without valves) with a red line through it doesn't mean no

There are huge gains to be made in road safety. Every aspect plays a part. However, education is the essential ingredient. If the car is less well protected (large spike to driver's forehead!) the driver can respond to that if they are well trained in perceiving risk. If the road is narrower, not so well surfaced, wet, icy, etc. then a well-trained driver can respond correctly to account for the conditions.

In short, of all the factors that can contribute and conspire to cause a crash, the driver is the one factor that can respond to and influence the effect of all other conditions. Therefore, surely, our main efforts must go in to educating the driver (however much experience they may think they have) in order to seriously and effectively make an impact on the senseless loss of life that occurs on New Zealand roads.

**Mark Revill-Johnson.**

(Ack NZ Police Ten One Community Edition October 2015)

musical instruments, it means you're not allowed to use your car's horn.

### Belarus

No parking meters or disabled parking bays (that we know of).

It's illegal to drive a dirty car.

### Belgium

Even if it's signposted as a one-way street, some streets let cyclists travel in two directions – watch out for them heading towards you.

### Bulgaria

You must wash your car on entering the country, and it's technically illegal to drive a dirty car. Russia, Romania and Belarus have similar rules.

You can only park on the left in one-way streets. This isn't intuitive because in Bulgaria they drive on the right.

Like Poland, the motorway speed limit is a fairly rapid 140kph.

It's illegal to use your car horn for anything other than avoiding an accident.

### **Cyprus**

You must not use your car horn in residential neighbourhoods or near hospitals.

You must not eat or drink anything while you are driving.

Making obscene gestures at other motorists is punishable by a fine (this includes shaking your fist!)

### **Denmark**

You must check under your car for sleeping children every time you get in it. This must be annoying for courier drivers.

### **England**

You can park on either side of the road facing in either direction like this:



Watch out for speed cameras that measure your average speed (other countries have these, too), and speed cameras are very common. Unfortunately, so are changes in speed limit. You'll be confused as to whether you're in a 20, 30 or 40mph limit when in any urban area (it's generally 30, though). When you're on a dual carriageway or a motorway you can travel at 70mph, and 60mph on single carriageways.

The blood alcohol limit is 0.08%, one of the highest in the world, but it's 0.05% in Scotland.

British cars must have a GB sticker on them if the licence plate doesn't include GB, presumably so that other drivers know they are right-hand drive.

Taxis are not allowed to carry rabid animals or corpses and you must not flag down a taxi if you have the plague!

There is a 'stationary idling offence' – if you leave your car running to warm it up in winter, you could be fined for causing unnecessary air pollution. This also applies at level crossings where (as per the Highway Code), you should turn off your engine if you expect to be delayed by more than two minutes.

### **Estonia**

All cars must carry two wheel chocks in case you break down on a slope (again, presumably because of the quality and reliability of the vehicle fleet in Estonia).

You must not have any alcohol in your blood as a driver in Estonia.

### **Finland**

The motorway speed limit drops from 120kph to 100kph between October and March because of wetter and icier weather.

In Finland, Norway, Sweden and Iceland you must use your headlights all the time.

You are only allowed to park on the right-hand side of the road, but on some days there is no parking at all if the streets are being cleaned.

### **France**

You're not allowed to use headphones of any kind, whether in a portable music device or for your phone.

Speed cameras can take photographs in both directions!

If a driver flashes their headlights at you it's because they will move first; they're not letting you through. You must also carry spare headlight bulbs.

If you park closer than 5m to a pedestrian crossing, expect to be ticketed.

Despite their love of wine, the French are only allowed 0.02% blood alcohol, as opposed to NZ's 0.05%. You must also carry your own breathalyser kit.

Children under 10 are not allowed to travel in the front seat.

## Germany

In certain areas at certain times you must use winter tyres.

Some stretches of the autobahn don't have speed limits. Expect to be overtaken by buses doing 160kph. If you drive too slow on the autobahn you can be ticketed. It's also illegal to run out of fuel on the autobahn.

If you make offensive hand gestures at another motorist you can be fined up to 500 Euros.

Cyclists must not have a blood alcohol level above 1.6% (yes, that's 1.6%, which is over three times NZ's level).

Some cities require you to have an emissions sticker on your vehicle otherwise you'll get a fine. (Ed. Comment: Does this apply to VW cars?)

You must turn your engine off while waiting at a railway level crossing.

## Greece

Greece banned smoking while driving.

## Iceland

You must not drive off the boundary of the road unless there's a formed parking area in order to protect flora and fauna.

Iceland has a lot of gravel roads. F roads are the highland roads and you are not allowed to take two-wheel drive rental cars on them. If you want to drive F roads you are likely to get blocked by snow, even in summer, so you'll need one of these below:



## Italy

You must not drive through certain historic areas without a permit.

## Luxembourg

All cars must have functioning windscreen wipers, but they don't technically need a windscreen. Guess that puts the Ariel Atom out, then!



Ariel Atom

## Macedonia

Your front seat passenger must also be sober.

## Malta

You don't need to indicate when you change lanes.

Malta is the only European country other than those in the British Isles that drives on the left.

## Norway

Your lights must be on at all times when driving.

Trams have right of way (common sense really as they can't swerve).

## Portugal

If you wear glasses for driving, you must also have a second pair in the car.

You must not carry a can of petrol in your car.

## Russia

Hitchhiking is illegal, so don't pick one up, and don't hitchhike yourself. The same rule applies in Switzerland.

And remember your car must be clean.

## Serbia

All cars must have a tow bar and three metres of rope – obviously a lot of breakdowns occur in Serbia.

## Slovenia

You must put your hazard warning lights on when you are reversing.

## Spain

In New Zealand a broken yellow line means no parking, but in Spain if there are no yellow lines it means no parking.

To reduce congestion, you can only park on one side of one-way streets, and the side depends on the day of the month and which side has even-numbered houses!

You're not allowed to use headphones while you're driving.

Cyclists always have right-of-way. We're not sure exactly what this means and we assume that they can't just randomly roam.

If you wear glasses for driving, you must also have a second pair in the car.

## Switzerland

You're not allowed to wash your car on Sundays.

If you wear glasses for driving, you must also have a second pair in the car.

## Seat belt and child seat laws

Every country has different laws regarding how old or how large a child needs to be before they don't have to use a child seat.

Every European country mandates the use of seat belts in all seats where they are fitted.

## Alcohol limits

There are many different alcohol limits throughout Europe. It's best to not drink at all as some countries have virtually zero tolerance. Also, if you are renting a car and you crash under the influence of alcohol you will not be insured.

## Mobile phone laws

Every country in Europe prohibits people from using a handheld mobile phone behind the wheel.

## Emergency equipment

Every country in Europe mandates that you must carry a warning triangle. If you are travelling to Nordic, Soviet, Baltic or Eastern European countries you will also need a fire extinguisher.

## Documentation

Most European countries require that you carry your insurance, vehicle and personal identification documents with you while driving. Take care not to leave them in the car, though, as if they are stolen it will be a major inconvenience.

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For the full article see:

<http://www.drivingtests.co.nz/resources/strange-european-driving-laws/>

## VW emission problems solved!



## They walk among us!

What a fuel! Motorist drags petrol hose across two metres from the opposite pump after forgetting which side her fuel cap was on.



Courtesy of The Daily Mail.



## Motorcycle Division

### Monash University releases study on the effectiveness of ABS on motorcycles.

This study sets out to assess the benefits of ABS technology fitted to motorcycles, classification, LC>125cc (no scooters with engine cylinder capacity exceeding 50ml and/or a maximum speed exceeding 50km/h), using Australian crash data, to compare these findings with published international research, and to estimate the likely benefits in reduced crashes and injuries in the years ahead. Importantly, the findings showed that the presence of ABS on these motorcycles resulted in a 33% reduction in all injuries in relevant crash types and a 39% reduction in severe injuries in these crashes. The benefits varied depending on the type of crash, whether it was a single or multi-vehicle crash, occurred at an

intersection, and whether the road was wet or not. There was good consistency in these findings across the various Australian states and similar international findings. Consequently there are marked savings in fewer fatalities as well as severe and minor injuries in these crashes and even further reductions are predicted over the next 10 years. It is predicted that these savings would be enhanced by efforts to increase the fitment rate of ABS on all new LC motorcycles in the coming years. The rate of fitment could be accelerated by mandating the fitment of ABS technology for all new LC>125cc motorcycles with associated reductions in crashes and severe injuries.

A direct link to the Monash University Accident Research Centre report can be found here:  
<http://monash.edu/miri/research/reports/muarc327.html>

Europe is mandating ABS on all motorcycles from 250cc from January 2016.

### Review – 2015 Suzuki GSX-S 1000 A



I suppose that buying a new bike generally involves 2 factors in differing amounts – emotional appeal (lust?) and fitness for purpose. The Street Triple which I've owned for the last 6 years filled both categories admirably. In terms of fitness for purpose, it had to have good performance but as a nod to my 5' 8" height and ahem.... mature years, it had to be light with a moderate seat height. The Triple was as close to perfect for my needs as you are likely to get. In fact, I was thinking about replacing it with either the sport-orientated "RX" version or the rumoured Street Triple 800. Trouble was, Triumph wouldn't confirm a release date for the 800 which confused the issue a bit. Enter fellow IAM Observer Ian Sarney who turned up to a ride on a new faired version of the GSX-S 1000. Sitting on it, I was amazed to find that I could get my feet flat on the ground and that it carried its weight really low. That was enough to

book a test ride on a naked demonstrator and the rest is history and explains how a Triumph man swapped to a Suzuki. Unplanned purchases sometimes yield great outcomes! I also tried to lay the blame on Ian to my wife but she wasn't having any of that.

### **Key Specifications**

Before we talk about what it's like to ride, a few technical details. The engine is based on Suzuki's flagship sport bike, the GSX-R 1000. The 2005-8 engine configuration was chosen as it has a slightly longer stroke than other models and was widely regarded as a torque monster. Equipped with upgraded internals, it produces a little under 150 bhp at the rear wheel and more importantly, huge dollops of torque virtually from idle. To get this power onto the ground without looping it, it has 3 stage traction control (wet weather, dry road and trackdays etc) plus an option to turn it off if your surname is Rossi. It comes equipped with ABS and the front end has 4 pot radial Brembos to pull you up in a hurry. The rolling chassis is brand new. It also has tapered upmarket Renthal handlebars as standard. Front and rear suspension is fully adjustable for spring rate, compression and rebound damping. The standard of paint finish looks to be extremely high. That's a heck of a high spec for around \$17,000, plus on-road costs.

### **Riding the beast**

Both the test ride and delivery trip home were anti-climactic in that it was almost like riding the Street Triple in terms of ergonomics and nimble handling. That's not denigrating the Suzuki but a massive compliment to just how good the Street Triple is as a great all-round bike. In fact, the power to weight ratio of both bikes are not a million miles apart and in real world road conditions, we're only talking fractions of a second differences in performance up to the legal road limit. The additional 42 kg of the Suzuki isn't at all noticeable because it's carried so low. Mass centralisation was clearly a major feature of the design brief, including a low, stubby Moto-GP style exhaust system. Having already said that it's nimble; a bit more flighty on bumpy roads than the Street Triple but I haven't yet set it up from scratch for my weight and the Triple had lots of attention in that respect. Nonetheless, it's very good indeed for a sport bike and feels more like a 600 than a 1000. It was noticed that on the most sensitive traction control setting, it actually activates on tight bends when "pressing on" in dry conditions. You can't actually feel it, but the TC warning light flickers on and off showing that it is changing power delivery characteristics. Rider comfort, at least for a person of my height is surprisingly good and even with stuffed knees; the rider foot peg height is relatively comfortable.

Acceleration with large throttle openings is absolutely brutal, and traction control is clearly beneficial in reducing unfortunate consequences from a ham-fisted approach. It raises the question of how much power is sufficient for everyday road use. In this instance, to borrow the phrase used by Rolls Royce; it's "*adequate*"!

The OEM tyres are Dunlop D214 sport soft compound. Excellent dry grip but like most pure sport tyres, require heat to deliver maximum grip. That is likely to be problematic for IAM work in all weathers. Given that the life of these tyres is likely to be somewhat short, they will be replaced with the outstanding all-weather Michelin PR4's fairly soon.

To slow the bike after the brutal acceleration, the Suzy is equipped with radial 4-pot Brembos up front and a single pot Nissin on the rear, with ABS to make the whole thing civilised. As yet, I haven't had to use the brakes in anger so can't make any objective comments. On the delivery trip home, they were quite wooden, but the dealer warned me that they would take time to bed in. I've done one deliberate hard straight line stop, simply to test the ABS, as I've never ridden an ABS bike before. The feeling left me a bit underwhelmed as there was no savage, wedding tackle squashed into the back of the tank-type deceleration. Perhaps that's the point of it - no dramas during heavy braking.

Fuel range came as a pleasant surprise. Range is important to someone who lives a fair distance from the main centres and besides, I hate stopping for petrol when on the move! With a sympathetic right hand, it's quite possible to get around 300 km or thereabouts. An excellent feature of the instrument panel is a "range until empty" readout, giving the rider real-time information. Allied with this, are instant and cumulative fuel consumption readings in several different output measurement formats.

### **Any downsides?**

Well, it is a sport bike so a pillion rider is unlikely thank you for the minimalist seat and high rear pegs on anything but a short(ish) run. If you don't plan to take a pillion or go very far with one, then they might still walk normally afterwards!

On the GSX-S website forum, quite a few riders have complained that the engine is snatchy off a trailing throttle. I would have said sensitive at low openings but probably no worse than the Street Triple. On a constant throttle at slow speeds, it is a little lumpy but it's not particularly annoying. However, if it's used for commuting in heavy traffic, it might become annoying but regularly riding a sport bike in those conditions is not exactly "fit for purpose"!

Another thing which may or may not be intrusive is a combination of the exhaust and induction noise. At certain throttle openings and speeds, there appears to be a harmonic which can be quite intrusive (read loud!) I like it but acknowledge that it might not be to everyone's taste.

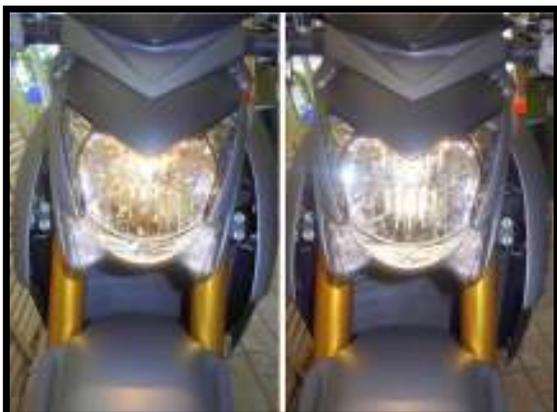
The marketing hype which went along with the bike's release played quite heavily on the "hooligan" element of the bike's nature so it's entirely possible that the induction howl is quite deliberate. Maybe the lumpiness too but more likely to be the consequences of emission controls.

### **Odds 'n sods and accessories**

I'm not big on pure bling to turn a bike into a tart's handbag. Extras have been limited to strictly practical use. With its pure sport bias, the GSX-S is not set up to be a sports tourer but a range of aftermarket racks are available to take luggage. I've simply opted for throw-over Oxford bags which have sat unused in a cupboard for several years.



For paint protection, 3M anti-scratch clearfilm has been applied to the fuel tank and rear cowl. It's virtually invisible. A front guard extension has been fitted to stop road grime being fired into the radiator. Crash mushrooms have been fitted to protect the bike in the event of a drop (shudder). A handlebar mount for the GPS has been installed and the standard halogen headlamp bulb has been replaced with an identical wattage but higher output Xenon bulb of the type I used on the Street Triple.



This has benefits in terms of visibility in both daytime and night riding. A small flyscreen is to be added, as much for looks as protection and that's about it.

### **In summary**

It's a beast of a bike and a lot of fun to get to grips with. As mentioned earlier, very much like a big Street Triple with added steroids. In some respects, it's the sort of bike that encourages immoderate behaviour - a sort

of “Who you lookin’ at” teenager with acne bike rather than a mature adult that says “I don’t have to prove anything”! Having said that, it’s also pretty sophisticated in terms of electronics and is a good example of just how far bikes have developed over the last few years.

Value for money? Heck yes!! Fun? In spades!

**Geoff James**

### **Product review – Gerbing G3 heated gloves**



I’ve used heated grips on some previous bikes and whilst they’re reasonably effective, they work best when there’s a screen, fairing or other device to deflect the wind. Even with heated grips, I found that the tips of my fingers suffered on a long haul in cold weather. The regular early morning trips on the Street Triple to Auckland in the winter months were often painful affairs with no heated grips, just relying on my Acerbis guards and layered gloves. It could be quite a distraction.

Thoughts turned to heated gloves and a bit of research showed quite a bit of variation in effectiveness and price of different brands. However, reviews of the Gerbing G3 were really positive. I purchased them from Revzilla in the US for US\$140 with a further US\$50 for the single connection

adjustable temperature controller. I had them shipped via the NZ Post YouShop Portland warehouse for around NZ\$25 from memory.

Dealing with the gloves first, they are made from the softest leather I’ve ever encountered, a real plus for control as many winter gloves are so stiff and bulky. They’re supposedly waterproof but haven’t been tested in the rain. Not really an issue as I can slip my NZ-made Rain-Off neoprene over-mitts over the top if required. The heating microwires run on both sides of the glove and through the fingers so that the whole hand is heated. The electrical cabling runs between your jacket liner and the outer shell and is not obtrusive.

The temperature controller plugs into the battery connector and you can either slip the control box into a pocket or put it in a pouch on your belt. It is easy to adjust with the gloves on.

Is there a downside? No big ones, but it takes a few moments to connect the gloves and the connection to the bike – not a big deal. However, remembering to unplug from the bike when you’ve reached your destination is important!

So do they work? Well, the gloves arrived at the end of the really cold weather but have been tested a couple of times in low single digit temperatures on the Street Triple. Even on a low setting, they were completely effective in keeping the whole hand warm so it looks like we’re onto a winner! It doesn’t take very long for them to heat up either. The new bike doesn’t have any hand protection from the elements but based on the results so far, it won’t be an issue and I’m looking forward to a pain-free commute to Auckland next winter.

**Geoff James.**

Past copies of the IAM newsletter can be found at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/k5xds6lg5jejaju/AADmWzSaWfWdsT93dyfDfKHEa?dl=0>



