



## **Southern Motorcycle Advanced Rider Training**

Minutes of an

# **Annual General Meeting**

of

RoSPA Southern Motorcycle Advanced Rider Training.  
(RoSPA SMART)

at

Southgate West Community Centre  
Ditchling Hill  
Southgate  
Crawley  
West Sussex  
RH11 8QL

on

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2006 at 7.30pm

### **Agenda.**

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of last AGM agreed.
3. Report by the Chairman.
4. Report by the Chief Instructor.
5. Report by the Treasurer and presentation of the accounts.
6. Report by the Membership Secretary.
7. Vote on constitution changes.
8. Vote for officers of the club.
9. Refreshment break.
10. Result of constitution changes and election of officers of the club.
11. Any other business.
12. Close of meeting.

Meeting opened by the Chairman at 8.00 pm.

### **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from the following members:

Chriss Albone, Rob Bright, Derek Cox, Duncan Hughes and Dennis Mustard.

Forty nine members were in attendance on the evening.

### **Report by the Chairman (Geoff Parker)**

Geoff said he was going to keep his report brief to allow time for discussion on the constitution changes.

He reported that the club had enjoyed a good social calendar over the last year which included 6 varied social evenings and 3 wizzes, two of which had encountered snow!

Ride School this year had the largest number of people signed up but also the largest number either not to show up or complete the course. This course had very low feedback from the students he said that he would like the new committee to see if they could address this.

The Group had not sought much new publicity this year; as we are still benefiting from last year's concentrated effort. One of the biggest publicity events last year was Patsy Quick, who we sponsored finishing the Dakar Rally, our logo and details are still on her web site.

Geoff said that in an attempt to understand why people unsubscribe from the email group he had been set up to receive notifications when they do. He had tried to contact these people to find out why but unfortunately none of them replied so we are no further on.

He said that overall there was little response from members if they had been contacted to find out their views and that the committee needed more input from the membership to take the Group forward.

Geoff then asked Paul Farmer to give a report on the training courses carried out during the year.

## **Report by the Chief Instructor (Paul Farmer)**

### **1. Courses – Diplomas**

Paul reported this year the Group has assisted another 2 Senior Instructors, Trevor Shearsmith and George Minns, to take the RoSPA Diploma Course and they both passed. In addition Simon Eddlestone, Ken Foster and Steve Low all took the Diploma Course without financial assistance from the Group and also passed. This brings the number of Diploma holders in the Group to 8 plus 3 dormant Diploma members.

### **2. ‘Approved Tutors’ and ‘Advanced Tutors’**

This year RoSPA HQ introduced the new ‘Approved Tutor’ and ‘Advanced Tutor’ grades. Only Diploma Holders were automatically given the ‘Advanced Tutor’ grade.

Our Senior Instructor grade is not really an ‘official’ grade insofar as RoSPA HQ is concerned. We have put in place with the help of Derek Stewart a Senior Instructor test modelled on the Diploma retest. RoSPA HQ decided not to give our existing Senior Instructors the ‘Advanced Tutor’ grade, preferring to group them with all the other instructors in the group as ‘Approved Tutors’.

There are 2 key items that are not fully in place at the moment in the new RoSPA HQ model.

The first is the new ‘Advanced Tutor’ test, which is to be a 3-part test like the existing Diploma course test, consisting of a riding test, an instruction skills test and a written knowledge test. This is not yet in place with the examiners, so currently we have no way of booking one. There is a fee of £50 to take the test, RoSPA SMART may decide to underwrite this fee but that is something which will be discussed in detail by the new Committee.

The second missing piece is the procedure by which Instructors (‘Approved Tutors’ to RoSPA HQ) are appointed. It is RoSPA HQ’s plan to ‘approve’ certain Advanced Tutors to test candidates for Approved Tutor roles. RoSPA HQ intend to limit the number of Approved Advanced Tutors, something the Group has been battling against because of the large number of members training in our Group. It is not clear at the moment how formalised the Approved Tutor test is going to be.

### **3. Courses – Instructors**

Our Instructors Course was held over every Sunday in March. As a result of the course we have welcomed Frank Humphrey, Petra Willoughby, Roger Manning, Sue Manning, David O’Mahoney and Geoff Berry to the Instructor Team. This brings the Instructor Team to 13 Senior Instructors (7 with Diplomas) and 19 Instructors. Or alternatively 7 Advanced Tutors and 25 Approved Tutors.

Paul thanked Derek Stewart for his invaluable help with the Instructors Course and the Senior Instructors who carried out the on-road training sessions.

#### **4. Courses – Ride School**

Ride School this year started out as particularly promising, with 41 students signed up, but sadly the numbers started to drop off even before the course had started, and it wasn't even raining!

We continue to run the best classroom-based training course of its kind in the UK at the moment and Ride School remains our principal means of attracting new members to the Group.

#### **5. Test & Retest Results**

Paul congratulated all those who had taken their test this year, as usual the results are pretty impressive:

- 5 Diploma Passes
- 1 Diploma Retest
- 10 Gold Passes - 4 of which were retests
- 7 Silver Passes
- 1 Bronze Pass

Finally Paul gave thanks to all of the Instructor Team who give up vast amounts of time for the benefit of the rest of the Group, especially during the running of the Instructors Course and Ride School. Without their efforts the Group would not have been able to do a fraction of what we have achieved in the 3 years that he has been Chief Instructor.

Geoff then asked Derek Stewart to give a brief report.

#### **Report by RoSPA Examiner (Derek Stewart)**

Derek said he wanted to clarify the answer to a question he is constantly being asked. Is slow riding part of the RoSPA test? He had sought clarification from RoSPA area examiners, and whilst Gary Baldwin and John Taylor are of the opinion that it should be, it is currently not part of the official test. However, if during the test the examiner is not happy about something in the candidates slow riding abilities, he/she may take you to an appropriate area and ask you to demonstrate your slow manoeuvring skills; but the examiner must tell you what he has an issue in the first instance. Slow riding should not be done as an extra part of the test.

Derek said that RoSPA SMART lead the way with regard to their procedures and are used as a model by RoSPA HQ. He thanked the previous and retiring committee members and said long may it continue.

## **Report by the Treasurer (Phil Howard) and presentation of the accounts**

Phil issued printed handouts showing the accounts and annual report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> October 2006.

He reported that the financial health of the Group remains strong despite a heavy commitment to expenditure in the last year. We have continued to support our instructors, trainee instructors and others who incur expenses for the benefit of the Group.

Several items of equipment have been purchased that the Committee considered necessary to promote the objectives of the Group. Items of note included business cards, a projector and banners. New first aid kits were purchased and issued to all instructors.

As usual the Group ran its annual first aid course and machine handling day, both events received a subsidy from the Group.

Sponsorship for Senior Instructors to attend the Diploma Course was continued this year with George Minns benefiting on this occasion.

Other expenditure items for the benefit of the membership included Trainee Instructors Ride School, BMF Membership, and hall hire and speakers expenses for social events.

The Committee, on behalf of the membership, also sponsored Jackie Howard in the Race for Life event in aid of Cancer Research UK.

Expenditure was offset by income generated mainly by a very popular Ride School and from membership fees. There is also an outstanding claim of £1504.18 from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) for tax relief on Gift Aided Donations which has been included as an asset in the accounts as payment has not been received.

The Committee is currently seeking clarification of what can be included in the claim as a Gift Aid Donation to the Group. In the past both Membership and Ride School fees were included but a recent review of the guidance notes on the HMRC web site led to some doubt over whether Ride School fees could be included. Tony Clark has approached HMRC on behalf of the Committee and has requested a ruling. The Group will be advised of the outcome in due course.

There were no questions on the accounts.

## **Report by the Membership Secretary (Mark Kennedy)**

Mark Kennedy reported that we had lost 38 of last years members. However due to a popular Ride School we have gained many more.

Currently we have:

Training members	113
Members who have passed the RoSPA test	44
Senior Instructors	13
Instructors	20
Trainee Instructors	8

Giving a total of 201 members, which is the largest RoSPA bike group in the country.

## **Membership Renewals**

Mark then outlined the committee's proposal to change the current way membership is renewed. Currently the renewal date for any individual member is annually from the date he/she joined and the idea for originally doing this was to spread the work for the membership secretary, this has not been found to be the case.

The committee now think it would be better to make the renewal date the same for everybody, the reasons being:-

- Administration of the membership will be easier, because although all renewal notifications would have to go out at once it will be much easier to administer and follow up.
- It will make the administration of the AGM easier.
- The affiliation to the BMF, which we intend to continue runs from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January each year. We pay the BMF according to how many members we have at that point plus a small contingency; we then distribute the BMF affiliate cards to the members. Because of the turn over of members we always run out of cards and have to obtain more, fortunately the BMF have kindly let us have these free but they may not continue to do so. We could buy far more cards in the first place but this would be a waste of funds, changing the membership renewal to a fixed date will solve this.

It is proposed to run the membership from the 1<sup>st</sup> of November each year. During the next year when members are sent their renewal notice they will be offered the chance either to pay for the remainder of the year up until November 2007 (the amount to be paid being worked out on a pro rata basis) or they can pay up to November 2008 at the current membership rate.

There were no objections to this from those present at the meeting.

### **Discussion on constitution changes.**

Geoff offered those who had proposed resolutions a chance to put across their reasons for their proposal and also to give those that opposed them a chance to speak.

### **Constitution change proposed by Tony Clark**

Seconded by: Roger Manning

Tony Clark spoke for his resolution. He said that the reason he had proposed it was to spread the workload across more members and to get more representative views of the membership.

Tim Bird spoke against the resolution. He said in principal it was an excellent idea, however if someone is given the role of assistant or vice or deputy they often do not have a defined role. The deputy is tied to working with a particular post holder and if the post holder and their deputy agree this does not widen the views from the membership, or if they disagree it can lead to a stalemate.

Trevor Shearsmith spoke against the resolution stating that when the group was formed it was deliberately decided to keep the committee small to aid decision making. Any extra work could be undertaken by forming sub-committees of members.

George Minns spoke against the resolution agreeing with what Trevor had just said and stated he did not feel assistant posts were needed. He said the Chief Instructor already had his Senior Instructors as assistants.

Karen O’Gorman spoke for the resolution. She said the extra posts would spread the workload and allow for better communication.

Tony spoke again stating he did not share peoples concerns of committee members not getting along, if anything it could lead to a constructive debate. He said it was an opportunity for more people to participate

## **Constitution change proposed by Andrew Adams**

Seconded by: Richard Stommer

Andrew stated the reason for the resolution was that although it was unlikely that the Instructors would vote a non-instructor to be Chief Instructor it was currently possible, making this change would ensure a suitably qualified Chief Instructor. The drawback is that if an Instructor did not stand for the position it could not be filled from the general membership.

## **Constitution change proposed by Geoff Parker**

Seconded by: Tony Clark

Geoff said he proposed this to give access to all members to the full accounts during the AGM. He said the membership trust the committee and feel they need a reason to ask to see the accounts this gives them that opportunity to see what is going on.

Chris Horton spoke against the resolution stating that the Charity Commission insists full annual accounts be given to any member that request them. He said it was making more work for the committee.

Andrew spoke against the resolution saying that the Charity Commission state that the full accounts have to be available to any member of the public; so as this is already a public document it would be better to post the full accounts on the web site for all to see. Also, if no committee member had equipment they were prepared to make available then this could ultimately mean the group would have to purchase a computer just to fulfil this requirement.

Andrew said that a paper vote will be taken on these changes during the break.

## **Election of Officers and Chief Instructor**

Andrew said the officers who were standing for re-election were unopposed and as such just needed proposing:

Phil Howard standing for re-election as Group Treasurer was proposed by Marion Barnes.

Andrew Adams standing for re-election as Group Secretary was proposed by Richard Stommer.

Mark Kennedy standing for re-election as Membership Secretary was proposed by Paul Reynolds.



Andrew said that a paper vote will be taken for Chairman and Chief Instructor during the break.

**There then followed a refreshment break.**

During the break the proxy and other paper votes were collated and the results recorded.

Geoff then reconvened the meeting.

**Results of vote on constitution changes.**

**Constitution change proposed by Tony Clark**

This resolution was not passed as there were 37 votes for and 33 votes against. This was less than the two-thirds majority required to pass a resolution.

**Constitution change proposed by Andrew Adams**

This resolution was passed with 63 votes for and 5 against.

**Constitution change proposed by Geoff Parker**

This resolution was not passed as there were 31 votes for and 36 votes against.

**Vote for officers of the club**

Andrew announced that George Minns had been elected as Chief Instructor and Marion Barnes as Chairperson.

Following the result of the vote Marion took the Chair. She thanked everyone for voting for her and the following people for all their help with the Group:

- Geoff for his work as Chairman over the past 2 years and she hoped he would remain active within the Group.
- Paul for his contribution in his role as Chief Instructor, she said training is what the Group is primarily about and the high standards are a tribute to his experience.

- Jackie Howard, who as a non-member has contributed a lot to the club and she was presented with flowers for all her efforts over the years.
- Karen for helping to organise all the social events over the last 2 years. Marion hoped that someone else will step forward to fill the role both she and Karen had vacated.

George thanked all those who had voted for him and he hoped to live up to the expectations of to those that hadn't. He thanked his grandparents, Paul, and Hugh and others for starting the group and hoped to continue their work.

**AOB**

There being no other business to discuss the meeting was formally adjourned at 10.00 pm.

Minutes adopted by: .....

Seconded by: .....

