

# Mintcake



October 2002

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Registered Charity No 259539

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## Editor's Comments

Apologies for the delay in your receiving this month's issue. As the A.G.M was held on November 6th, it made more sense to incorporate it here rather than wait until the next issue in a months time.

Many thanks to all those who've sent in comment and suggestions as to how I can improve your newsletter. Keep the feed-back coming as it's the only way I'll ever know what everyone thinks.

Some of those suggestions have been incorporated into this month's issue. Although every program I've tried, all have 'Newsletter' templates having three columns, some of you don't like this format and so the number has been reduced as a trial. The web-based Adobe Acrobat version has only one column, as you see here.

By far the majority of people asked, don't read their newsletter from the screen. They print it off. Therefore, the format is designed to accommodate this. Only the delivery system is electronic. We are working on a screen-viewed edition but this is not likely to be sent out to Team members, it will be available on the website for those who prefer that format. By now, all this year's newsletters to date, are on the website but remember that Mintcake used to appear every two months so there are no Feb, April or June issues.

This month's issue carries the news from the A.G.M. where Trevor was voted in to take over from Hilary as Team Chairman. Personally, I found it not a little strange that the meeting did not record a vote of thanks to Hil for all the years she has handled the job and all the traumas' she has helped to see us through. In my humble capacity as acting newsletter editor, I would, here, like to rectify that omission. Thanks for all your efforts Hil !

Rob

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## EXERCISE REVIEW, WEDNESDAY 16TH OCTOBER

This exercise was run as a call out. The aims were:  
To demonstrate to provisionals how a call-out is handled

For the team to re-familiarise itself with working at night with winter coming on.

To aim for a fast, effective and efficient team performance. For everyone to think about what aspects of the exercise demonstrated good team performance, what aspects were less good and how we could improve our performance. A quick but comprehensive review revealed that all objectives were achieved and that team performance (bar a few minor points) was excellent. Everyone had learned from and enjoyed the ex. Well done - the carrots paid off!

## SCENARIO

The police received a call from a Mr Rick Astley @ 18:30. He and a friend were fell running when his friend fell and badly injured his leg. The casualty was in great pain and couldn't move. A contact number was given.

The location was open fell side near the top of Brunt Knott above Staveley.

The team arrived in good time, found the casualty and quickly dealt with the injury. A few grunts occurred when the rather large casualty (6'5" & 16 stone!!) had to be carried off the hill.

Yet again provisionals faired well in numbers. Members less so.

Paul Astle / Dan Shiels

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## Dates For The Diary

### Monday 18th November at 7p.m.

20% discount night at Kentdale Rambler. All those associated with the team in any way are welcome.

### Wednesday 20th November

Training:-  
Defib, CPR, Life support SK

### Sunday 24th November

Training:-  
Search & Evacuation CM/PA

### Wednesday 27th November 19:30 at base

Equipment & Medical working group meeting.

### Friday 29th November

**Team Annual Dinner. Watermill, Ings**

Details to follow (See AGM article)

### Tuesday 10th December

Base & Vehicles Working Group meeting @ Base, start 19.30. All welcome

### Wednesday 11th December 19:30 at base

Equipment & Medical working group meeting.

### Wednesday 18th December

Training:-  
Communications AD/RB

### Sunday 29th December

Training:-  
Navigation Exercise PA

### Friday 28th February 2003

**Team Winter Training - Scotland**



This year, in the Ben Nevis area, based at the Aite Cruinnichidh bunk house at Roy Bridge.

Accommodation has been arranged from Thursday evening (27th Feb) until Saturday evening (1st March)

Those wanting to come along, add your names to the list in base.

## Callouts

### Sunday 6th October

The Team were called out to look for one of two sisters who had been walking in the Kentmere area. Having become separated, the sister with the map made it back down but the second one became uncertain of the route. Using a mobile phone, she called for help but in the short time it took us to get a vehicle up the valley, she had found her way safely down to the road. Mobile One gave her a lift back and re-united her with her sister. This was one of those callouts that probably wouldn't have happened but for mobile phones.

### Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October

The Team were called to an Ambulance assist where a domestic dispute had left a 37 year old, Grange over Sands lady, unconscious in woodland. Evacuation of the casualty was effected by Police and Ambulance crew, before our arrival and we were stood down.



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## General Team News & Comment

There is now an index functioning on the 'Fact-Files' page of the website. It can be found at :-

### [Fact-File Index](#)

You can down-load the information sheets but they do take about two minutes, during which nothing seems to be happening. Stick with it and try not to multi-click as this can upset your computer.

A couple of new items have been added to the index, manufacturers info sheets on smoke and red-light flares, and if any of the Team's working groups would like to add information sheets to this page, send them along to me and I'll upload them and add them to the index.

Not quite as I would like it just yet but it's a start.

### Comms

A reminder from Dudley that anyone experiencing problems with their pagers should contact him for a speedy solution. Dud has his own pager but not a crystal ball so he needs to know if someone has left a pager for him to fix and, more importantly, what the problem is!! It does happen. Anyone who feels they can be without their pager for a couple of weeks, might like to consider whether they really need one at all. We have a lot of others who do.

### Our team computers have had a service

Yep a wee upgrade our 2nd system has now Microsoft windows 2000 pro Installed also Microsoft windows 2000 office c/w anti virus/adobe acrobat5/

Winzip8.1/visual basic6.0/internet explorer6.0 also some hardware improvements Have been made to the system to such as another hard drive fitted and extra memory (Edoram) added as well as dual port USB (universal serial bus) added to this system

Also the CPU (central processor unit) has been jumped faster and may I add 2 pints of Lager (Stella) was enjoyed at the same time.

Now the Communications team will be looking at improving the system in the control Room this will be in the form of a newer operating platform and some more memory (Sdram) added this will improve the speed of our system the operating platforms will be based on NT technology (solid of a rock) and all this will put in place by the MEN in BLACK IV team (communications team)

Dudley (Paging & IT)

The new helicopter radios have been re-united with their speaker microphones and are now operational. They are currently fitted with channels 53 and 73, both of which are used specifically for helicopter comms. There is also a training channel that can be used as it's name suggests. However, this needs some care as it's one of the helicopter channels set at reduced power.

Again, anyone needing any help with these radios, speak to me and I'll give you a swift demo or you can have a look at the detail sheets on the Team website if you're too shy to ask.

Rob

### Support our new Base Officer

With Kendal's new traffic system you must be saving at least three minutes a day travelling around the town. So why don't you put that time to good use and join a very select group of volunteers?

There are currently 4 people who take it in turn to come into Base once a month and spend about an hour and a half giving the building a top-up clean. (Not too serious scrubbing as, generally, Team Members aren't too messy and look after the building.) If four more people volunteer it would only involve a visit by each person once every two months - even easier for everyone involved. The actual day and time of the cleaning visit doesn't matter, just some time during your week on the rota. Anyone associated with the Team is eligible, be it supporters, hill-going, operational support, provisional members (or indeed spouses, partners, children or parents of any of them). If you would like to volunteer, or just get more information on what is involved, then please contact Paul Astle (Base Officer) on

015395 67233. It would be nice to have a new rota sorted out by the end of November, so use today's 3 minutes by giving Paul a call now.  
Keith

## Fund Raising

Public relations rather than fund-raising, saw representatives of the Team at Ghyllside school who were celebrating their 50th birthday. Unfortunately we were set-up alongside a police traffic vehicle and both of us made the mistake of letting the kids into the front seat.

That's caused an out-break of 'war of the woo woos' until the police officer decided to demonstrate how a speed-gun and hand-cuffs worked. Bless him!

Thanks to Simon who turned out at very short notice to give a hand. Sorry mate.

About fifteen team members turned up to the wine tasting held at Kendal Rugby Club, Nov 4th. Neil, the manager of Kendal's branch of Oddbins treated us to a first-rate talk on wine, it's production and consumption. A thoroughly enjoyable evening where the surplus from ticket sales went into Team funds. It certainly beats dropping your spare change into a collecting box !! Neil proved to be an expert speaker and had brought along a considerable quantity of wine of all types. At least one car had to be abandoned until the following day, as this wasn't the usual thimble-full tasting. I can heartily recommend any future evenings of this type to anyone who enjoys a glass of wine (or three). Thanks are due to Neil, and Liz and her fund-raising group, for arranging it.

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## The Annual General Meeting November 2002

In a year that's proven, so far, to be relatively quiet, even when compared to last year with all it's Foot & Mouth problems, the Team has still managed to increase it's membership to 69.

Hill-going members remain pretty much as last year but we have new Provisionals and new Supporters. In the latter case, a further 8 have joined the Supporters Group under Liz Parkes. These are our unsung heroes as there's very little glory in rattling buckets and emptying collecting boxes. Without them, however, we might as well all go home as we couldn't afford to exist. Even in a year with no callouts, we would still need around £25,000 to run the Team. It's never a quiet year for our Supporters!

Bill Morris, who has organised the emptying of the collecting boxes for many years, is now calling it a day. Very many thanks Bill. He is succeeded in this crucial task, by Phil Morgan, our erstwhile President.

Over the past year, Liz's Group have helped raise over **£5867** from collections, and the boxes, of which there are over 100 throughout our area, have raised a further **£6847**. This represents 50% of our annual running costs and is no mean feat.

## Election Of Team Officers:-

Those positions due for re-election were awarded as follows;

President	remains with <a href="#">Mr Phil Morgan</a>
Vice President	<a href="#">Mrs Barbara Minton</a>
Deputy Team Leader	remains with <a href="#">Mr Eddie Harrison</a>
Membership Secretary	remains with <a href="#">Mr Ian Johnson</a>
Chairman	<a href="#">Mr Trevor Cotton</a>
Vice Chairman	Position was not filled
Newsletter Editor	<a href="#">Mr Les Telford</a> will take over from myself in a few months, when his dog, Kes, has completed her SARDA training. In the meantime, I will continue to act as editor unless anyone else would like to have a go (?)

Congratulations to those Team members who have been elected to posts they've not previously held. Barbara, has been with the Team for many, many years and now holds the new position of Vice President.

Trevor, we all know and is also a long standing Team member. He leaves behind the positions of Vehicle Officer and Vice Chairman, to take up his new role as Chairman. Having sat on the Magistrate's bench in the past, Trevor is well suited to keeping us under control!

We still need a Vice Chairman, but the position of Vehicle Officer has been ably filled by my good friend, John Everett.

The next A.G.M. will be held on Thursday 6th November 2003

After the A.G.M. a Main Committee meeting was held where Simon, our Social Sec announced that the Team Annual Dinner to be held at the Watermill at Ings, will begin at 19:30 for 20:00hrs and will cost you £15. Menu will be up in base shortly.

Congratulations to **Alison Mackie** on being awarded full Hill-going status from her current position of provisional. Alison climbs at grades that have the same type of 'E' numbers as a Pot Noodle and is a welcome addition to the Team's technicians. That means she gets her own newsletter now Pete!

Congratulations also to **Hamish Wilson** who moves up from pre-provisional to provisional.

## 100 Club

This month's winners are:-

62	Mrs B. Gray
76	Mr Andy Beavon
10	Mr Nick Owen

The next main committee meeting is to be held on 8th January 2003

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## Articles

### RAF Leeming Mountain Rescue Team



Rob asked me if I could produce an article on the RAF MRT, in particular the Leeming team for the Mintcake. Under pressure I agreed, not a great fan of staring at a computer screen and rattling my brain for alternative words for; and or the. I will try and explain what we are, who we are and what we do which will hopefully give you an idea how to turn a hobby into what is a reasonably well paid job, that is for the fortunate 7 that work full time on the team.

### The Role of the RAF Mountain Rescue Service;

The RAF Mountain Rescue Service (RAF MRS) was formed during the Second World War to recover aircrew from downed military aircraft. The first team formed was Llanwrog, which is now Caernarfon airfield, there is a museum at the airfield which includes RAF MRS memorabilia (well worth a visit if you happen to be in the area). The service today is much the same as when it started our primary role being for military and civilian aviation incidents. In addition to this we are also responsible for military personnel missing whilst on training expeditions and if available missing or injured civilian walkers/climbers. The latter is where we fit in with the civilian MRT organisation assisting teams on rescues, and is normally the bulk of our work. Like the helicopter Squadrons it is this work that provides most of our "hands on" experience dealing with casualties without which we would find it difficult to deal with our primary tasks. In addition to the above responsibilities we can be utilised for civil emergencies such as floods and major disasters, in this situation we will only be used for life saving situations, unlike the Forces generally who would carry out support roles like sandbagging, transportation etc.

### The Team

Like all Mountain Rescue teams we are dependant on volunteers, even the Permanent Staff, myself included are all previously volunteer members. The Leeming MRT is a 25 Man unit, 7 Full time Staff, which I will deal with later, the rest of the team is made up from personnel who work in various sections around the station with varying trade skills from aircrew to engineers and admin staff etc, etc. All members of the MRT carry out these duties with no additional pay and at considerable expense of their own free time. Now those lucky ones like myself who are employed on MRT duties Full-time! What do we do I hear you say and surely it must be a holiday you may ask?

### Team Leader - Sergeant "Jimmy" Clethero

My job involves the day-to-day management of the MRT and the HQ building. This itself portrays a pretty vague working schedule, which in fact is exactly what it is and perhaps is why it is so challenging and rewarding, not knowing what lies ahead. I do have a routine albeit fairly flexible. I oversee what each of my full-time troops are doing, planning of team exercises, allocating places on courses, utilising my trade skills to help in the development of our equipment entitlements. Planning and conducting weekly team evening briefings, liaison between the team and all the other agencies we work with; civilian MRT's, Emergency services, RAF Leeming executives, my bosses down south etc etc. The job is extremely challenging and rewarding, quite unique in the fact that as a sergeant, I am in sole charge of all the teams operational functions and indeed unique in the fact that the RAF MRS is led by experience rather than rank, the mountains don't respect rank!

### A bit about my time on RAF MR

I joined the RAF in 1980 and joined the MRT soon after. I have served at RAF Stafford, RAF Kinloss, RAF Lossiemouth, RAF Akrotiri, the Falkland Islands and here at RAF Leeming. During my time with the Mountain Rescue Service I have attended most of the courses available including Search Management, Team Leader, Advanced Rescue, Advanced Immediate & emergency Care, MLC/SPA/MIA along with a host of military courses. The military offer many opportunities to climb abroad, in my time I have travelled widely numerous times to the Alps, Spain, Norway the Himalayas, Canada and Alaska.

Some of the callouts I have been involved with include over 50 aviation incidents including Lockerbie, Kegworth (M1), Shakleton on the isle of Harris. This was interesting in the fact that we essentially hijacked a visiting Air Officers Jet-stream aircraft to get some of the team across to Harris we were even served tea and biscuits en-route. I was involved with the Rescue of Servicemen from Low's Gully In Malaysia, on this occasion I was told at 11am that we were going and after gathering some personal gear was off to Heathrow by 2pm the same day. We arrived in Kota Kinabalu after a 16 hour flight arriving at 2am and after a couple of hours sleep was on a rather tatty Malaysian Sikorski up the mountain for what I thought was a recce with minimal kit, 10 days later after a successful rescue I was re-united with my kit. The Helicopter was unable to fly us up the mountain and landed us in a field, watching oil leak from various crevices and the rotor blades cutting through palm trees as we landed was not what I would determine as entertaining! I think the most rewarding rescues I have been involved with have been here in Blighty, during my first 2 weeks at Kinloss I was out on callouts constantly, one of the luckiest finds happened when I was on a search in the southern Cairngorms. Just outside the area I had been given was a Munro that I hadn't yet ticked. Needless to say I made the slight deviation to seize the opportunity. On arriving at the top there was the deaf man we had been searching all night for, success!

### **Deputy Team Leader - Sergeant John Ritchie**

John joined the RAF in 1982 as an apprentice aircraft engineer working mainly on Tornado aircraft both at home and abroad. He has been involved in many military operations and exercises through squadron detachments. He joined the part time staff at Leeming Mountain Rescue Team in January 1997 and in March 2000 was given the full time position of DTL.

The role of Deputy keeps John very busy, he's responsible for, under the team leader, the day to day management, supervision and operational efficiency of the team. An interesting job, which also allows him to meet the many and varied, characters from both military and civilian MRT worlds. John believes the best part of his job is working in the mountains with other rescuers where teamwork can make a real difference and the worst part of the job is the politics!!

John, now 37, was born and bred in Cumbria and some of his family still reside in Workington. In his spare time, not that there is much, John is a keen gardener and can often be found at various model aircraft shows.

### **Training Co-ordinator - Corporal "Jocky" Marr**

Jocky (from north of the border) looks after the co-ordination of all the teams training needs. He highlights any training that needs to be conducted to me and given my approval will arrange training to those requiring it. He also co-ordinates the courses on offer both military and civilian. All members of the team have a training Record and Log Book

not dissimilar to the ML Log Book. Members of the team can use these books as evidence of experience when attending ML training or Assessment courses, Jocky regularly checks these books to ensure they are being kept up to date and are accurate.

### **Communications Manager - Senior Aircraftsman Andrew "Addo" Addison**

Addo our resident Regiment Gunner (Rockape) takes care of all the communications equipment, maps/guide books and the specialist C3 vehicle. Amongst his arsenal of gadgets is HF, VHF & UHF Radios, also the team has an array of mobile phones including Imarsat satellite phone for almost anywhere guaranteed comms. He also looks after such items as NVG handheld sets and binoculars and other useful search tools. On callouts Addo normally act as my right-hand man, manning the radios and recording details of the incident.

Influenced heavily by his father, a member of Cleveland MRST, Addo joined the RAF in 1997 after completing a 2 years sport science course and a years outdoor education training, joining the mountain rescue team in 1998 as a part timer and on permanent tour in 2001. At 24 he is well qualified having gained his SPA, ML Summer, RAF Summer rock climbing course, RAF Winter Ice Climbing Course and IEC. He took part in the MRS Alps 2000 expedition, RAF Lossiemouth 2001 Pyrenees Expedition and recently returned from the RAF Valley Alps 2002 expedition.

### **Transport Manager - Cpl Gary "Gaz" Brown**

Gaz started his career in Sheffield Steel making prototypes for shop displays and roll containers. He joined the RAF in 1988 as a general technician at St Athans and has also done stints at RAF Henlow, Germany, RAF Cosford and RAF Marham in the flat lands of Norfolk. While at Marham Gaz spent a considerable amount of his own time travelling to join the team on weekend exercises and displayed all the characteristics of a valuable troop. He joined the permanent staff at Leeming in 2001 and is responsible for the vehicle fleet ensuring its serviceability and that the contents of the team vehicles are ready for any eventuality. The fleet comprises of two four ton load carrying vehicles, 5 specialist land rovers and a specialist communications vehicle.

At 33 Gaz holds the RAF Summer Rock Climbing certificate, winter ice climbing certificate and recently passed the ML summer assessment. He maintains a genuine love for rock and mountains and has been involved in talks to Hebden Bridge Scouts and to the Hertfordshire Fire Brigade 'Rigging for Rescue'.

### **Equipment Manager - Senior Aircraftsman "Mouse" Andy Fielding**

Andy is the most recent addition on our permanent staff. He joined the RAF in 1999 as a supplier working on 25-fighter squadron at Leeming, moving to MRT in July 2002. His job as equipment manager involves dealing with supply needs of a 25-man mountain rescue team, which involves responsibility for maintenance, issue, fitting and exchange of all team equipment and clothing. Purchasing of goods and inventories also comes under Andy's remit.

Brought up in Oldham Andy had the perfect background for equipment manager – working at the Disney Store! He is 21 years young has just returned from RAF Leemings Alpine Dawn Expedition 2002 and is ready to jet off to the Grand Canyon in September with the Supply Squadron via Las Vegas.

### **Medical Co-ordinator - Senior Aircraftsman Gareth Davies**

Who had trials for Lancashire Cricket Club– as those at the close match with LAMRT found out – is responsible for the day-to-day management of the medical equipment and IEC training. This includes: ensuring all equipment is serviceable and maintained according to the modules, replacing any used or life expired materials, training team members in basic IEC skills and arranging for them to go on more advanced courses, and probably the best part, organising IEC exercises on the hill. Not always the most popular of exercises, especially when they are at night and the troops are at Windermere for the weekend!

After 4 "entertaining" – to use his words – years on the team, Gareth is leaving the RAF in pursuit of a career as a Paramedic with Greater Manchester Ambulance Service, a career he admits himself would not have considered before joining the Mountain Rescue Service.

### **In Summary**

Like all MRT's the Leeming team is very much an integral part of the national organisation working in close liaison with other RAF and civilian teams. The team deploy every weekend to exercise in various mountainous locations. It is without doubt a great lifestyle, meeting many different people and never knowing what lies ahead that keeps us going. The team, like all teams is only functional through the commitment of its volunteers given up their own time to conduct the essential work. We are fortunate in the fact that equipment is provided from the public purse and do not have to seek money from charitable sources which the civilian teams depend so much upon. On joining the RAF troops are generally posted for 3-year tours, which inevitably means the team, is constantly changing, in most cases team members move from team to team. The training of new members is constant and we are forever trying to improve in all aspects. That said and done it is the characters of the team that make it just that, a strong unit of like minded people who love the hills, the friendship and the challenges of the unknown. We love to get away to the hills each weekend and are always ready and willing to help out at any place or time, which leads finally to our catchy little motto; Whensoever or as some might say Whensober!

Jimmy Clethero  
RAF Leeming MRT

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## The 'New' Highway Code



After 20 years of avoidance I have recently started driving on motorways.

I am amazed at the new Highway Code now in place. Of course I haven't actually read it!

Like that large tome clogging up my bookshelves, the 'KMSRT Handbook', I guess and deduce what must lie within their hallowed covers by observing the way expert drivers and rescuers skillfully carry out the million and one tasks and code-keeping that are necessary to avoid chaos on our Motorways and during rescues.

The first thing that impacted on me are all the impressive new motorways, built, I heard, at huge public expense by the many engineering company sponsors of the last government. Ex-Cabinet members are now Directors of these companies, 'The Guardian' says. I muse, "There is no such thing as a free lunch."-Discuss. 20 years ago there were mainly two-lane 'by-passes', and now we have a brand new third lane on the inside of the old two lanes. I am so impressed!

As almost all vehicles occupy the middle and outside lanes, I deduced the obvious:- that the new Highway Code prohibits vehicles from using this inside lane! I did notice a few lorries and cars breaking the law by driving in it. Does the tarmac surface take time to achieve maximum hardness, like one of John Hall's fine fillings, so must not be driven on for a few months, or even years?

Equally new. I deduced, is the part of the Highway Code that bans vehicles from using indicators to show that they are exiting the motorway. But vehicles, lorries especially I deduce, have a mandatory Highway Code law to both pull-out and indicate simultaneously, just as I and other vehicles draw level. I think I read in The Guardian, or heard it on Radio 4, that both the ban and mandatory law arose from a government initiative to raise our levels of constant alertness in order to spot Al-Quaida terrorists. My level of alertness has risen from bovine, cud-chewing, switched-off-ness, through stage HA (Highly Alert) to stage PSS (Paranoid-Scared-Shi.....). But I put this last stage down to my needing to get up to speed after 20 years of sensory deprivation, as no other road users seem remotely concerned.

I do admire such honed and constant awareness. I observe and admire these qualities too in colleagues in the Team, spotting and avoiding the boulder in front of them when carrying the stretcher and raising my alertness by not mentioning it to me. I do value their looking after my development.

The new 'Star-trek'-like 'tractor-repulsion beams' that must be fitted, I observe and deduce, to some cars and white vans, are a real safety breakthrough. It enables these vehicles so fitted to safely drive at 70 mph, 'attached' to my bumper with only a 15 foot gap separating us. Again, other drivers, far from being concerned, enjoy the intimacy and companionship of three or four cars driving at 80 m.p.h., locked together by the tractor-repulsion beam.

This hugely and obviously decreases congestion. But the, I presume, experimental stage of this device was high-lighted when, in driving in my broad trekking sandals, I unfortunately hit the brake at the same time as the accelerator, and the 'tractor-repulsion beam' in the white van doing 80 mph and so attached to my bumper, failed. There was tyre-smoke and screeching brakes as the young test-driver showed his HA level of alertness by expertly slaloming across 3 lanes; they need to do more work on this tractor-repulsion beam.

So, responsibly, I will send back my over-wide, mail-order. Guardian-readers'- reduced-price-trekking-sandals, as a Highway Code violation risk. But I am also wondering if I really should go out and buy a copy of the new Highway Code in order to fully claim my responsible place in this individualistic, 'no-such thing-as community', post-modern motorway world. And stop reading 'The Guardian'.

Ray Green

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**Next Issue : First week in December**