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mra
'are we
relevant?'

the official magazine for the ^{mra} motorcycle riders association of sa. *'let those who ride decide'*

centre *stand* ● march 2002

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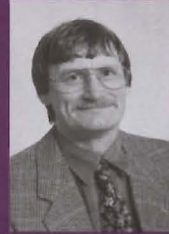
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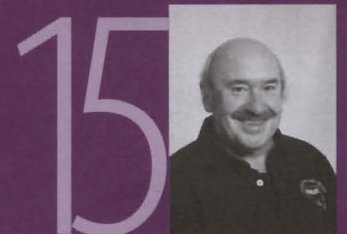
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from the
editor

100 hours of blood sweat and tears, tantrums, throwing pc's out of windows, paralysed with insane laughter, seeing lots of spots, dots & extra terrestrials, chained to the computer ad nauseum, to bring you, this brand new Centrestand.

Completely redesigned from the ground up in a new desktop application, this Centrestand is the synergised effort of 4 people, nearly 130 hours combined. Toiling 'till 02.00 and trying desperately to make sense of the manual, only to discover there is a bug in the software is enough to drive any one to bungee jump without the aid of the rope!

As part of the overhaul in the image of the MRA, we are attempting to bring the MRA into the NOW scene. Are we relevant? This whole issue is about relevancy. To be relevant we have to be seen. We are the quiet achievers, 'but no more' she wailed! I don't need to go into detail about relevancy, suffice to say I have left it to our columnists, and a mad welcome to Ken Binns (you gotta meet this guy!)

We are making a difference and getting off our collective derrières to commit to the MRA. There are many of you out there taking your rights for granted. Just remember who is doing all the slog work, because without us, you wouldn't have the luxury of fuel restriction exemptions, no number plates, non slip paint etc etc.

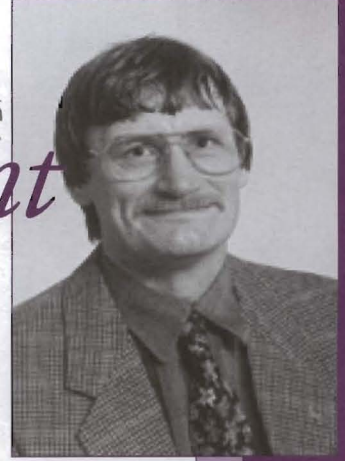
My objective as Editor is 2 fold. One, to keep you informed. Two, to make this magazine commercially viable. As part of this exciting initiative the MRA has appointed an advertising officer, Colleen O'Mahony. She will help me with objective #2, so be nice to her.

A big thank you to Ken Binns of KGB Photography for all his time, effort and software tricks. Dale Knöote-Parke for topping up the teapot and the 'I hate it when he is right' advice. Jeff Headley from Ngapartji Multimedia for his training, patience and software patches. These people prevented me from feeding myself to the sharks whilst publishing this magazine, and without them there wouldn't be a new magazine.

So, now the ball is in your court, and I am waiting in anticipation for some feedback.

The Editor

from the
president



The new year started with a bang. The police, the RAA and the Advertiser did a Road Safety blitz and who copped it amongst others? Why, the bad bikers of course. And why? Because they speed (terribly so) and they don't have front number plates so we can't catch them of course (they cheat).

The police especially want everyone to believe that if we only put front number plates on bikes then the road toll would decrease. Hands up all those who believe this. Come on, why don't I see any hands? This is an emotive campaign on the part of the police, supported unquestioningly by the RAA and by the Advertiser whose journalists seem unable to let research and analysis get in the way of one eyed reporting.

The police have gone as far as putting stick-on number plates (or if you want to be legal - frontal identification) on police bikes in an attempt to make a point that number plates can be fitted on bikes. I guess that's all right if you happen to own a fully faired BMW LT 1100 or R series BMW. But what about the rest of us? Many of the two wheeled police aren't too happy about it either. They feel it is an imposition that they should be targeted in this way, there are safety considerations not being taken into account, and as bike riders themselves, they understand the real issues and dislike being made to appear to be tacitly supporting the push for front number plates.

Elsewhere in this issue we are printing some of the letters sent in to the Advertiser by the MRA which did not get printed (in fact none of our letters got printed). This reminds us that it is up to all of us to keep these issues alive using the media where we can. Even though our letters were not printed it was gratifying to see some bikers viewpoints made public.

continued on pg4

mra^{sa} notes



Great Escape Rally - 18/19 May at Marrabel

This will be the ninth Great Escape Rally, the first one was held in 1994 and so we have had a lot of fun over the years. If you haven't been then join us for the weekend. You can come on Friday and help us set up and then pack up with us on Sunday, or if time is short then day trip it on Saturday. It's only 100 k from Adelaide and a very nice run. You could even come up via the Barossa or the Clare Valley. The rally is catered (food, beer and softies) Friday night through to breakfast on Sunday (if anything is left), wood and water is provided, byo accommodation. Special features are a raffle, gymkhana, awards, rally port, doughnuts, the whale joke, interstate visitors, flush toilets (yes, we fixed the doors ladies), lots of friends, both new and old and lots and lots of laughs; the usual alcohol assisted kind and the normal kind. Families are welcome, cars are left outside and we intend that every one has a good time. Leave your attitude at the gate, pick it up as you leave (if you still want it, that is.)

New Home for MRA

You will all be pleased to know that we now have a regular meeting place (most of the time).

Committee and General meetings will now be held at the Gilles Plains and Hampstead RSL Sub-Branch, Bennet Avenue, Manningham. To get there, head for the North East Road and find the Bennett Memorial Reserve. This is about 400 metres NE of Ascot Avenue and less than a kilometre SW of the OG Hotel. The reserve has a cannon on display out the front and the club rooms are at the back of the reserve, enter from Bennett Avenue. There is plenty of safe parking for bikes, tea and coffee will be available.

Meeting Dates & Plans

The PICK YOUR DATE meeting timetable will still hold for 2002 at this stage. Venues for Committee meetings on September 9 and December 9 and the General meeting on July 29 will be as advised in a future Centrestand as those dates are already booked out at the RSL. Social Sips (25/2, 29/4, 24/6, 26/8 and 28/10) will be held at the Alma Hotel, Kensington Road, as will the Rally meetings for March to May. Toy Run meeting venues can be advised by calling the Toy Run Coordinator, Paul Morgan on 0401 145 541. Note these changes on the PICK YOUR DATE 2002. Where possible we will put all meeting times in the Advertiser Club Notes (Thursdays), so check there if you are not sure.

Toy Run Sponsors 2001-2002

from the president

continued from pg 2

Next time, make a point to write or email. The more of us that do it, the more opinions are viewed.

In the meantime get to understand the issues involved in the arguments put forward by the various bodies who have an interest in road safety and use them when you hear someone arguing from ignorance. Let us know if you find anything interesting. Thanks to John Fisher for putting us on to a Motor Magazine article and some interesting information about the realities and moralities of speed and enforcement. Go to <http://carpoint.ninemsn.com.au/dubhouse/FeatureStory.asp?ID=3338#9msnshared> for more information. John can be contacted on johnfisher100@hotmail.com if you are interested as he has some other relevant addresses as well.

MRA Promotions Sub-committee

This year the MRA is making a push to raise our public profile and membership base even higher than before. To this end we have set up a promotions subcommittee which will be responsible for developing ideas and strategies in these areas and for making them happen.

Members of the subcommittee are Ashley Knöote-Parke our Editor, Aidan Hanafin, our Membership Secretary and coopted members Ken Binns and Colleen O'Mahony. All have backgrounds in promotions and marketing and want to use their skills to improve the MRA. Thanks to member Ken Binns for providing the impetus for this initiative and to the others for rising to the challenge. If you feel you have any contributions to make in this area contact Ashley in the first instance.

Road Safety Sa 2010

At the time of writing we are a week away from a state election so the Road Safety Strategy investigation endorsed by the Liberal Government may or may not go ahead depending on the outcome of February 9th.

The draft report provided by Transport SA in support of a long term strategy highlights some aspects of road safety which are significant. Research has shown that the most effective area of improvement for lowering accident figures is improvements in the road system (48%). Improvements in vehicle design for occupant protection is

next (25%) and improvements in road user behaviour (22%). Use of new technology in vehicles has very little impact (5%). It is clear from this that the publicity surrounding the road toll is misplaced. Harsher penalties ie fines, new technologies ie front number plates and blaming the victims ie don't speed, is where the emphasis is placed today. We need to get it back into proper perspective.

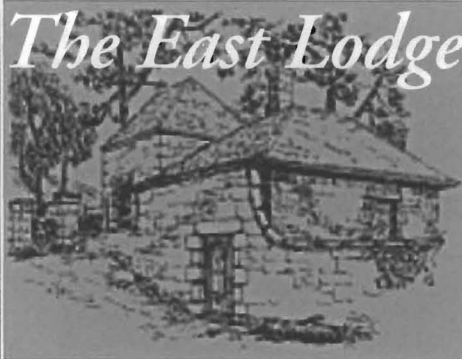
Of particular interest to motorcyclists are recommendations relating to conspicuity (daytime running lights), power to weight ratio rules for novice riders, frontal identification, rider training and licensing.

The draft report is currently open for discussion and Transport SA has called for comments from interested parties of which the MRA is one. We will be presenting a submission on behalf of motorcyclists and will report further on this matter. If you want to make a comment yourself or just read the document, contact John Spencer, Manager Safety Strategy, Transport SA (8343 2860). Submissions are to be in by March 1.

Ride Safe, Harald



The East Lodge Gatehouse Bed & Breakfast



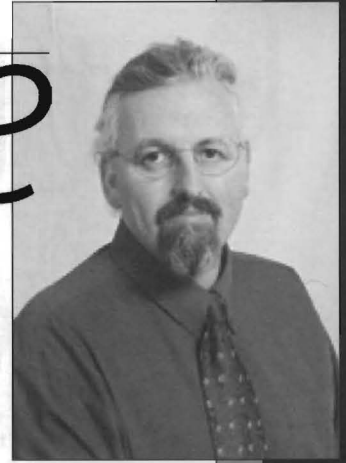
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relevance



binns

ken

There is nothing like a moment of pure clarity, crystalline in structure, so pure, that the awareness it brings you can only be described as brutal.

My moment of clarity happened at the recent MRA Toy Run. I was moving around the crowds of motorcycles and motorcyclists video taping various characters and their machinery, when one of them asked me who I was videoing for, I told them quite proudly that I was shooting for the organisers and they then replied – "Who's that?"

I damn near choked on my tongue at the absurdity of this question, it absolutely stunned me that this person could not be aware of who was running the show. I was left to stew over this moment all day. Later, I was chewing over how annoyed I was at this heretic, having the nerve to say, "Who's that?" When it occurred to me to go over the question.

Who is the MRA? Why is the MRA? What is the MRA? How is the MRA? Where is the MRA? When is the MRA? What

flavour is it and how many do you get in a packet? Readers, if these questions need to be asked this means that there is no information available. We all know the information is available, so why is the information being ignored or forgotten?

There is only one reason - Relevancy! There is nothing more unsettling and revealing than to question you own relevancy. Yes it is the inevitable question that all associations and lobby groups must face. "Are we relevant?" and if we are, are we applying this relevancy.

If we set about and ask ourselves if we are relevant, I am sure the answer will be yes, but if "we" is all we ask then sadly, we have become irrelevant. The asking must be of the owners of the 36,000 registered motorcycles in South Australia. We must regain visibility and regain contact with this body of people to stop the MRA sliding into irrelevancy.

I am concerned, are you? I am concerned that I do not see or hear of the MRA as much

as I used to. Are you?

I am concerned that everyday someone else has some uninformed opinion to proffer about motorcycling. Are you? I am concerned that a way of life that I have enjoyed for over 20 years is under more threat now than ever before. Are you?

One disposable comment by a passing member of the public has managed to move my switch from "Safe" to "Fire". I have taken the first step in my own personal effort to make sure the MRA does not become irrelevant. That first step was to find out when the next meeting was, go along, have a listen, and then say, "This is what I do, what needs to be done?"

I am sure you will find that you need us and we need you! See you at the next meeting. □

letters *to the editor*

Dear Editor

Front licence plates that stick on....
Ha! Give me a break. "Sorry officer it came off in the rain!"

Or it dog ears giving the bike that nice lived on appearance. Those boffins in the Gov or force just wont give up will they. I can see the publics' impression of bike riders right now.... Licence sticker on front.... must be good law abiding citizen. NO license sticker...must mean a mad blood thirsty child eating rapist murdering speed freak on board!

Regards, Mark Kimberley

Email: markimb@airnet.com.au

Dear Editor

I recently had some tyres fitted at a certain motorcycle shop on Main North Road and whilst I was waiting I picked up a copy of 'Centrestand' (June issue). I like the magazine as it speaks in a language that is easy to understand and has some humour thrown in.

I would like to join the MRA, as the prospect of the introduction of front number plates is quite a scary one. As stated in the magazine, it is up to the motorcycle community to join together and act NOW. The RAA is misguided in many areas, and that is coming from a member who also drives a car from time to time.

I am a fourth year law student and would look forward to assisting the MRA from a legal point of view if necessary. I would also like to contribute to 'Centrestand' and the acquisition of a digital camera may help. What I gather from the magazine is that whilst you

have a reasonable amount of members, not many communicate or bother to contribute in any meaningful way and then they are probably the ones who complain about nothing getting done!

If I may respectfully ask, why are you called the 'nazi witch'?

Thanks for your time.

Gino.

Dear Gino, Thank you for writing to the MRA. I am pleased you like the mag (I hope you like the new one). We welcome new members and encourage you to attend the meetings - now held at the RSL - (see back page for details). Keep the letters flowing. The Editor

Letter To The Editor: Adelaide Advertiser. Sent 15/1/2002. Not Published.

Dear Sir

The front number plates for motorcycles issue is a distraction from the real issues that might make a difference to the road toll. The introduction of front number plates will have a minimal effect on the road toll as many riders caught speeding, as with many drivers speeding would not have been riding dangerously. Catching someone doing 70kph in a 60 zone in a straight line on a fine day in light traffic or something similar is more likely to be due to inattention than a need for speed.

Assistant Commissioner Burns claims that "... some riders continue to speed because they knew they could not be caught head on by speed cameras." I think that the police have adequately shown that speeding motorcyclists can just as easily be caught from the rear as from the front. Motorcyclists are aware of this but just

as some car drivers will continue to speed so will some motorcyclists, either by inattention or by disregarding the risks.

Unfortunately there is no radar unit that can measure degrees of inattention and here is the problem. What is needed throughout our driving community is the development of a 'culture of care' as part of the strategy for making our roads safer and this can only be provided through effective public awareness campaigns and driver and rider-training programs, particularly regarding advanced driver and riding skills. These enhance awareness of the limits of personal skills and make road users more attuned to becoming aware of what is going on around them.

Unfortunately, Transport SA's draft strategy, Road Safety 2010, as reported in the Advertiser 14/1/02, makes no mention of driver or rider training issues. It reflects the police view of law enforcement, which is punitive rather than preventative and will reduce resources for the development of long term creative alternative solutions.

The police stand alone on the issue of front number plates. The concept has been rejected on safety and engineering grounds by state and federal bodies and the police have not involved themselves in any of the normal consultation processes, which are necessary to road rule changes. The grandstanding on this issue by Superintendent Zuener and his colleagues distracts the public from the real road safety issues, makes the police seem to be doing something and offends motorcyclists.

Harald Lindemann. President, Motorcycle Riders Association of SA Inc.



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road safety



mcperson

sean

Well, the start of the year has brought some old and new issues up once again; Supt. Zuener is flogging the dead horse of front number plates, (I think this guy; is trying the make the Darwin Awards!!)

What we do need are members behind us with this issue, without numbers we are having trouble doing our best.

Recently there have been some interesting editorials in the advertiser, and as well as being an instrument of Sapol, the articles have been biased at times!

An example; some bozo claims that the black tyre marks on Mt Barker Road are from motorcycles and we are a danger to pushbikes. Having personally checked out these marks, all of them appear to be from cars! Simple solution – ban cars from these roads!!

Another twit waffled on about lane splitting and how cyclists and motorcyclists shouldn't share lanes with other vehicles. This moron hasn't read the National Road Rules that were recently introduced, its reassuring that our government has still failed to remove the jealous, single-minded, ill-trained motorists off the roads.

continued on pg 12

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tired tyres

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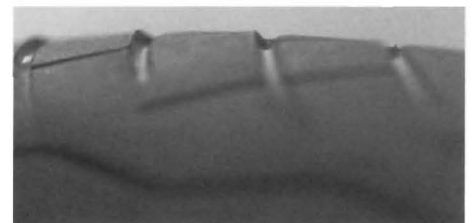
2 week old tyre



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This close up illustrates a condition
known as 'feathering' or 'scalloping'.

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Recently I was pondering the problem why my front tyre still had various amounts of tread, but the performance seemed to have gone out of it completely. Further to this was why my front tyre had worn more on the right hand side and why there seemed to be odd shapes appearing in the tread?

The first source of knowledge was the handy gent who fitted the tyre. He suggested that since 80% of the tyre was used to commute and get around town, 20% for recreation the extra wearing on the right side of the tyre was due to the camber of the road.

I needed more technical input though. I contacted Peter Dunstan the owner of Bike City on Wakefield St, however Peter was in the same group as me, experienced bike rider, but was not keen to speak technically in case, well, we lied. So he sent me in the direction of Barrie Fullston Agencies.

Barrie, a most engaging man, he has been the agent for many bike products, but his long-term product association has been with motorcycle tyres. Among some of the anecdotes he regaled me with were looking after Mick Doohan and Michael Dowson's tyre needs at the first world Superbike race series at Oran park, he also helped Peter Dunstan, among others, during their race careers. As a wholesaler the retail trade rely on his knowledge and experience with motorcycle tyres and their manufacturers

The perfect tyre, if it exists, is a radial construction with a race bred compound, very high performance, no forgiveness and is only put under the bums of the very gifted. The very nature of a top class GP rider is to push everything

past the limit of design so that they can find the weaknesses that the engineers can then design out.

The main ingredient for road tyre design is forgiveness. This means various rubber compounds, carcass designs and tread patterns

tired tyres

are used in synchronicity to work in all conditions, if one of the these main features of the tyre is below par then the performance goes out of the tyre early.

An unattributed suggestion for the 'feathering' or 'scalloping' is the very fact that the tyre has tread is the reason that this happens.

Barrie, an emotional man when it comes to motorcycles and tyres, wiped the tears from the corners of his eyes (this is a complete lie, but it adds feeling), apologised for going on about the past, but through his long time in the motorcycle tyre industry *The main ingredient for road tyre design is forgiveness* wanted to add this:

As much as Michelin have introduced the radial carcass and various rubber compounds, all manufacturers use the same construction (a point they will deny), this is evident now more than ever that the racing is so close at top levels.

Just because a tyre is cheap doesn't mean it will offer overall tyre economy! Barrie still has a long standing piece of research conducted over many years and various brands. He assessed low price verses bigger price and on a cents/kilometre scale the more

expensive model won every time.

If a tyre is constructed properly, it should require no offset weights to balance it. A cheaper tyre will require much balancing.

They are not only round and black and there to keep your rims off of the road.

Tyre performance doesn't only mean "High speeds, elbow down around the corner", it means having all round grip at all times. It means on a dark and stormy night as you make your way home through a pouring rain and you suddenly apply a big handful of brake lever, the tyre will grip like wombat poo to an army blanket.

So I got my answer and some great insight to the crazy world of motorcycle tyres, there's more information but this column is only small.

Ciao
Ken Binns

March 2002

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April 2002

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FZR1000 EX



May 2002

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June 2002

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up



road safety

continued from pg 7

Speaking of excellent examples of fine driving, watch out on the roads for the following vehicles: Silver Supra VOV-131, Light metallic green Commodore UKT-021, Dark Blue Commodore GIDEUP. The drivers of these vehicles have displayed wondrous driving skills in front of me and in one case; it's lucky one of us was watching, as the Suzuki would have made an interesting hood ornament!!

This year I hope to be more available to do more in my position as Road Safety, but I do need help from you. If you come across a traffic hazard, contact us and we will send you a hazard sheet with a return envelope and we'll pass the information onto the relevant departments.

On another note, did anyone experience difficulty up the Gorge over the Australia Day weekend? Pervie and

myself were up there on Friday and noticed diesel spilt on the up track.

I am attempting to find out if there is an after-hours hazard reporting number, so problems, such as this, can have something done about it quickly. I had visions of punters going arse-up all weekend because of a motorist's (truck drivers) inattention.

The hardest thing I find is trying to convince these drivers that the damage they can cause. Hence my labels of selfish and jealous as they seem to drive around with the attitude they have the right to do what they want.

A recent example lately of a driver jailed for killing a passenger in his car after he crashed whilst under

the influence of alcohol. This driver had 11 D.U.I. convictions and 13 drivers licence disqualifications. Obviously, the penalties are not working, as killers like this don't care; the only way to stop them driving is physically remove them from the streets, personally, D.U.I. convictions should have compulsory community service at the morgue, so they become mentally scarred for life of the damage they could have caused.

Until our authorities take responsible actions to increase the attitude and training of the drivers, the carnage will continue!!

Well, that's enough ranting for this issue. Go out and check your tyre pressure and keep safe out there, but most of all enjoy yourself when you ride!!




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surfin' with john



dorrrestyn

john

Here we go surfing part 2, I hope you found some useful links from the first issue of surfing with John. For this issue I have decided on a theme, searching for the right things to spend your motorcycling money on. There are many times when you walk into a motorcycle shop looking for a specific product, for example new tyres and are faced with a plethora of brands and types with the helpful sales person encouraging you towards one brand. This issue is all about being able to do some research on specific motorcycle products so that spending those hard earned dollars is not in vain.

Starting with tyres, there is a fantastic review of many brands from cheaper hard compound tyres to the stickiest and most expensive tyres on the market. This review www.tl1000.com/pb_tyres/sport_rider_sep_2001.htm from England compares many different brands of tyres on sports bikes around a race track, not always the most relevant type of tyre test to the day to day motorcyclist, but it is well worth the read if you are in the market for a new set.

The largest expense in motorcycling is the bike itself and www.ausmoto.com.au has an extensive list of motorcycles available in Australia. The site begins with this paragraph, which says it all: "I was in the market for a new bike, and I couldn't find any comprehensive up-to-date information on what motorcycles were available in Oz, nor the sort of

prices that were being asked, so I thought I'd better do something about it." And the result is a guide to everything in Australia with two wheels and an engine, well worth a look even if you are not looking for a new bike.

If you are looking for a second hand Motorcycle online www.motorcycle.com is a great site to bookmark. The parts and accessories section www.motorcycle.com/mo/partaccs.html covers many products, including street gear, off-road gear, general parts and accessories and, books and videos.

Have there been times when you just can't find that rally site that you know should be in the next paddock then, you may need a GPS device. This site www.gpsriders.com/ is devoted to the place where GPS and Motorcycles (and their riders) come together.

It is always good to get first hand advice from someone who has used the product that you are after. A general site where anybody can add their personal experiences of any motorcycle related product is www.motorcyclegearreview.com Currently its content is a little lite but you can add your own experiences with any of the listed products and get the feedback of others using the same product.

Need to finish off your custom M/c with a polished aluminium tank then this link in the UK

www.thetankshop.com will give you just what you need for the best-looking custom on your street. Some of the photos on this site are brilliant and the craftsmanship of the end result is superb, in the flesh these machines must look stunning.

Everybody these days seems to know someone who has been taken for a ride when purchasing over the internet, so to finish this issue on things to buy I am providing this site www.verrill.com/moto/rants/2001/010518rant.htm that gives very good advice on buying and selling over the internet. If you intend to purchase anything over the internet then I recommend that you read and follow the suggestions provided on this page.

Ensure you keep up to date with the MRA of SA via the site provided for us, it's members' www.mrasa.asn.au. If you have any comments or interesting web sites that you want to share with other motorcyclists let me know. You can contact the author via John@johnd.8k.com □

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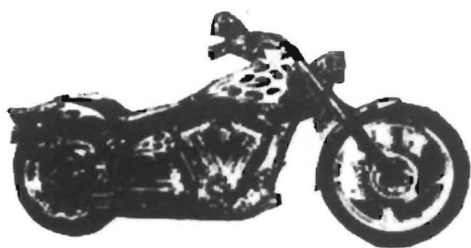
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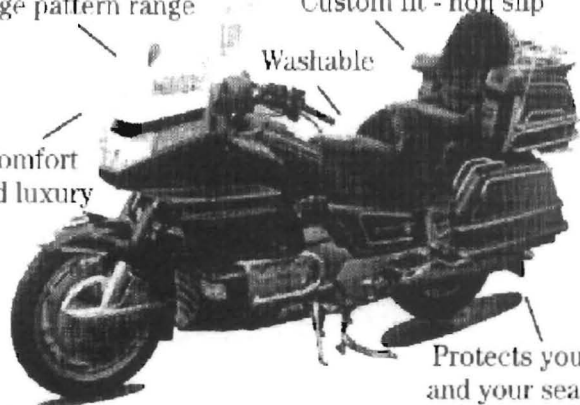
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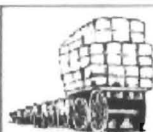
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Happy New Woof everydog!! Jedda and me were real good becos santa gave us lots of pressies.

We got smacko's (me and jedda went wako!!hahawoof) we got some lollies and we got a big chewy bone each. Jedda got into truble becos she buried hers in dads favorite abacardo plant, he got really cross, I don't see the problem becos its easy dirt to dig in, whoops I'm not supposed to tell; that I hope dad doesn't find out.

So, Rebecca from Geelong and Daniel Parker from Christie Downs won a playstation each with a bike game. Well coloured in I looked pretty good and the colour was n the lines and best of all they made dad look like a big wuss ha!!

Anyway, I have some extra good news it is that mrs Hazel who is dad's paylady said dad had to let me have two age groops dad has to listen to what Mrs Hazel says but I don't know why!!

I have to go now and drag some clothes out of the wash basket so I can make my bed, oh boy, dad's reading a book, I'll go and ask him to give me a scratch RIGHT NOW!

Bye woof!!

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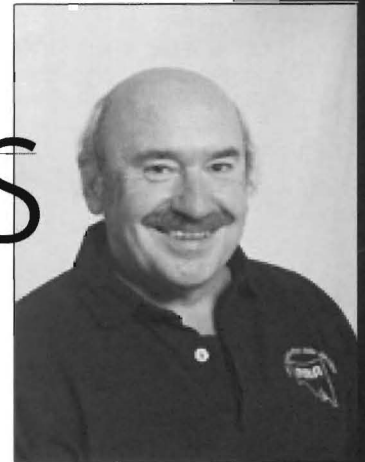
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avuncular tales



dicker

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What could be more enjoyable on a fine summer's day than to put on all the riding gear and head off into the hills for a relaxing trip, stopping somewhere along the way for a coffee and a chat with like minded motorcyclists?

Being one of those older riders that admires Mick Doohan and commenced riding on a 250cc motorcycle all those years ago, I regularly attend advanced rider training courses every three to five years to help iron out any bad habits that have crept into my riding style and to acquire the new skills that are provided by such courses. So why shouldn't I use any of the excellent roads in the hills to put my skills to use, despite what some of the road Nazis have said in their letters to the mainstream press in recent times?

I've always maintained that the push for lower speed limits on the roads would only lead to more of the same highway situations that we have always encountered. The unskilled roadusers were doing 70 kph through the hills when the speed limit was 110 kph, now that it has been reduced to the 'much safer' speed of 80 kph these very same drivers are now still doing less than that, sometimes as slow as 50 kph!

Riding or driving at a speed appropriate to the existing road conditions has always been a habit of mine, so that I fail to see the roadsense in the activities of the current crop of incompetent drivers and road safety 'experts' that are making the situation worse by their actions.

One letter to the press expressed similar sentiments by pointing out that it is foolish to lower the standard of driver requirements and expect that action to lower the road toll, instead we should be improving roadusers' abilities by increased driver training. As far as I'm concerned the applicants for a driver's licence should have to undertake the same form of compulsory pre-licensing training and undergo the same testing and have a power to weight restriction on the vehicle that they drive whilst on P plates. No one can get a motorcycle licence on a high performance bike such as a Suzuki Hyabusa, so why should it be that a driver's licence test is able to be done in a Holden HSV at present?

The low level of driver skills is apparent every day not only on the roads but in carparks and driveways as well. On several occasions during the past week when I've been with some latte guzzling friends I've noted the blatant inability of a lot of motorists to correctly park their vehicle at the kerb. One Sunday morning when we were at Jimmy's shop in Crafers we were fascinated by the attempts of some chap in his late forties with a new VW attempting to park it outside. I do mean attempting, he would fail any pre-licence driver's test because after about four attempts he was satisfied when he had managed to park it with the rear left wheel mounted on the kerb!

And this monster is out there somewhere waiting to kill you!

The best thing that all of us motorcyclists can do is to stay ahead of the motorists in our skills and awareness. Also we should be on the backs of our politicians constantly about the spate of ridiculous restrictions being imposed upon us as responsible and higher skilled road users. After all we do pay enough for it in training courses, registration and insurance and also the constant harassment by the media, the authorities and the general public.

We should all be demanding value for the money that we pay for using the highways, and also we should be requiring the authorities to start exercising a duty of care towards us that does not include repressive activities. A frontal numberplate or any other type of ID system on a motorcycle will not improve our situation on the roads, because the groups lobbying for that to happen are not interested in our well being, on the contrary, their aim is to remove us from the roads.

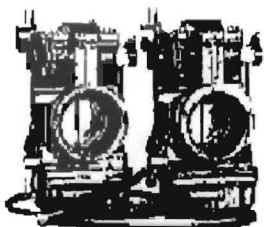
So lobby your member of parliament, demand sensible actions by government towards us, and demand that other road users be treated the same way that we are.

Keep on riding and stirring. □

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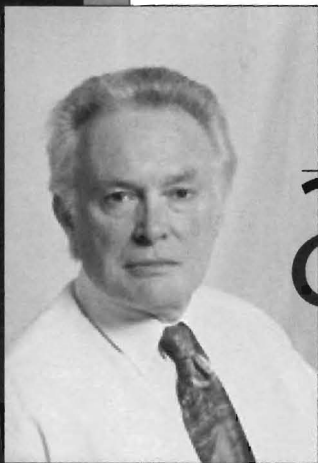
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report

50 Kph Proposal

Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC), at the behest of the National Road Transport Commission (NRTC), recently completed an evaluation of a proposal for a 50 kph default urban speed limit throughout Australia. AMC was invited to comment on the proposal and its evaluation.

Opinions amongst the motorcycling community are mixed, being generally reflective of those of the wider populace at large. On the one hand, some support the proposal with reservations, while on the other, questions have been raised regarding the veracity of the research or, rather, the findings, and the real value to the community of a reduction in the default urban speed limit.

Advantages of a 50 kph limit

- Potentially lower impact speeds in a crash, hence reduced severity of injuries, vehicle and property damage.
- Potentially lower collision rate due to increased chance of avoidance.
- MUARC claims reduced noise and pollution, but I will refute this below.

Disadvantages of a 50 kph limit

- Increased travel time (albeit minor).
- Increased confusion due to differential speed limits (these are becoming common due to the recent trend of setting limits according to road conditions - not a bad thing in itself).

- Likelihood of average speeds increasing in those streets with the lowest average speeds under the current regime.

- Potential for increased noise due to more frequent gear changes and higher-revving engines. Contrary to statements in the MUARC assessment, noise may actually increase as, while most vehicles can run more or less happily in top gear at 60 kph, they will need to change down at lower speeds to avoid labouring. This is particularly so for motorcycles, potentially leading to even more (unreasonable) claims from the public that motorcycles are unnecessarily noisy vehicles.

- Potential for increased, not decreased, noxious gas pollution for the above reasons, again contrary to claims in the MUARC paper. Further, the paper assumes a directly proportional correlation between road speed and engine emissions; in fact, an internal combustion engine has an optimal level of efficiency which is related more to engine speed and load than to road speed. The paper's claims in this regard are, therefore, simplistic and misleading.

'Road marking paint. It's a real win'

General observations

Although more crashes occur on arterial and collector roads than on local streets, a 50 kph default limit on these roads, while possible reducing the severity of crashes, may increase their frequency due to frustration, particularly during peak travel times. From the figures cited, the benefit/cost ratio (BCR) on these roads would not warrant 50 kph implementation. If the final decision is to implement the proposal, it should apply only to local urban streets.

A 50 kph limit would obviate any requirement for traffic calming devices, such as speed humps, plateaux and slow points. These devices are not conducive to motorcycle safety, and in themselves are causal factors in motorcycle crashes. A condition of introducing a 50 kph limit should be the removal of such devices.

Further, although such traffic calming devices are intended to reduce speed, they

do it at the expense of noise and pollution (changing gear, braking, accelerating, suspension movement), and increase difficulty for emergency vehicles and public transport.

Some evidence suggests that people will tend to support a reduction in speed in local streets tend not to comply so conscientiously with lower limits in streets other than their own.

Councils seem to place a low priority on clear and visible signage. This could increase problematical aspects of the proposal's implementation, particularly during the introductory stage.

It is not at all clear if an impartial approach has been adopted in the adjudgement of the benefits and drawbacks of a 50 kph urban speed limit by whatever methods considered, and in the ensuing recommendations.

Conclusions

A number of anomalies and questionable interpretations or claims exist in the assessment, suggesting that a judicious approach to the information both generally available and specifically presented should include the possibility of interpretations and conclusions other than those provided in the MUARC paper.

As yet there is no agreement or determination of whether or not travelling time costs should be included in any calculations of BCR, and if they were to be included, on what basis they should be apportioned. This is but one of many factors which throw into disarray arguments on the relative value of the proposal. At the very least, this suggests that it may not be viable to introduce the proposal on a BCR basis.

Although the depth of the research, if not the breadth of the conclusions, of the MUARC assessment is to be applauded, it serves more to explain the confusion than to provide clarity in the direction we should take regarding the 50 kph proposal. At best, we can say that there appear to be clear benefits, but that there also appear to be clear disadvantages, and that its justification is, therefore, dubious, and its implementation at this time, premature.

Of further note, it would appear that speed reduction is deemed to be the only or main solution to crashes. Is this because speed and its effects are more easily monitored, measured and controlled than other contributors or causal factors? While speed is estimated to contribute to 10% of crashes, we seem to spend 90% of our resources on addressing it.

Although applicable to all road users, motorcyclists in particular suffer from the consequences of dangerous or poor road alignment, delineation, surface, maintenance, road marking paint, "safety" devices, street furniture and, especially in the average urban environment, poor visibility, both in seeing and in being seen, through inappropriately placed or maintained trees and shrubbery at intersections, junctions, roundabouts, slow points and the like.

Treatment of these problem areas is likely to produce a far greater effect on the crash rate than juggling with speed differentials and will address any potential gains of a reduced urban limit, as will improved driver training, particularly with regard to vehicle control, hazard perception and awareness.

Recommendations

- Deferment of the introduction of a 50 kph default urban speed limit pending further examination of existing data and, where requisite data are not adequate or available, conducting appropriate research to obtain it.

- Broadening the scope of the above to facilitate impartiality.

If it is determined that the proposal be implemented:

- apply the default limit only to local urban streets, not collector or arterial roads;
- make the introduction of the proposal conditional upon the removal of speed control devices;
- minimise signage but ensure that what is utilised is clearly visible;
- allow for a reasonably long period of introduction and adaptation.

Although the value of a 50 kph limit is, at least in our minds, yet to be conclusively

determined, we do not have a categorically negative approach to the proposal. It is appropriate to bear in mind that motorcyclists are fully supportive of any non-discriminatory and viable initiatives which are likely to significantly enhance safety on our roads.

Motorcycle Theft

The AMC has been working with the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council in the development of a questionnaire which has recently been circulated to around 110 AMC Members and branches. The confidential survey will provide a rider's perspective on motorcycle theft and security and will be used to work with rider groups, motorcycle manufacturers, insurers and government to address Australia's motorcycle theft problem.

Older Riders

The Road Traffic Authority of NSW has ordained that 80-year vintage motorcyclists shall be tested for riding competence, and every year thereafter. That's not unusual: all states have some form of age-related retesting. What is also not unusual - but certainly noteworthy - is the bureaucratic idiocy which is attached to it.

Try this: there is no provision for testing sidecar riders. If an 80-year-old motorcyclist has ridden nothing but outfits all his/her life, he/she must still be tested on a solo. What do you reckon are the chances of passing?

But wait, there's more! Riders can use their own (generally large, as long as they're solo) machines for the test, but the test course is the one laid out for 250cc or smaller learner bikes. Or they can hire a small (and unfamiliar) bike on the day.

They only get one shot at the test. Fail, and they're off the road.

Perhaps it should be the bureaucrats who are tested for competence.

Front Numberplates

The police just won't leave this alone, despite being the only individuals on the planet who think it's a good idea. Frontal vehicular identification by means other than dangerous plates will come in time, as technology catches up with the enforcers' wish list, but the police want it now, not tomorrow, and are prepared to jeopardise our safety in the interests of our safety.

Have you seen the stick-on number plates on the fairings of the police bikes? Probably not, as they were stuck on the fairings in January and started coming off in February. But questions of their legality as numberplates have arisen.

Hang on, they're not "numberplates", whose shape, material, production and placement are controlled by law, they're merely means by which the police powers-that-be may identify their bikes from the front - aka "frontal identification devices".

Like the rationale though, the consistency is pretty thin on the ground. If these "Clayton's plates" are OK for the police bikes, why are they booking MX5s for having a non-complying vinyl stick-on "numberplate" on the bonnet?

Anyway, by the time you read this the police will have conducted an inaugural meeting of select parties to examine alternative means by which bikes can be identified from the front. I will have attended that meeting and, as always, will keep you informed.

By the way, as I have said before, the AMC is not opposed to the principle of frontal identification, but to the fitment of the only device by which a motorcycle can presently be legally identified from the front, namely, a metal plate. The police want the law changed now when technology cannot accommodate such a change.

Road Marking Paint

At last, something positive to report. Positive? It's a real win. Through our place on Standards Australia's Road Marking Paints Committee we have secured an agreement for the skid-resistance of thermoplastic paint to match that of the road, which must have a skid-resistance of no less than 45 BPN (British Pendulum Number - a complex but accurate method of measuring surface friction).

Due to the difficulty of obtaining both high skid-resistance and high retro-reflectivity, manufacturers have, in the past, opted for the latter, as slippery paint has not been seen as a problem for the majority of road users, i.e. cars. Development in glass bead technology (for reflection) and acceptance of our argument that retro-reflectivity is of secondary concern to motorcyclists compared with skid-resistance has afforded us this significant milestone in safety.

Don't hold your breath while the paint dries, though. It will take a while to finalise the Standard, prepare the product and apply it in accordance with normal maintenance schedules. But it's in the pipeline, and will happen; and that's what counts.


Numberplates. The police just won't leave this alone'



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on runs & things



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dale

Relevance. That's what we explore in this issue; relevance... and so relevance is what I am going to warble on about in this column. Earlier on in this new-look mag you may have noticed a new contributor, Ken Binns, also wrote a piece dedicated to the relevance of the MRA, so I will continue on with that theme in my own inimitable fashion.

We are at a crossroads. As Ken has stated, who is the MRA to be your guiding light? What is our relevance to you, the motorcyclist? The MRA needs to go forward into the 21st Century, and that generally indicates a re-positioning or re-branding to help increase our membership base, but at

the same time, we don't want to scare our current members away. We need to be 'relevant' and that, I believe, means offering new services. Long gone are the halcyon days of protest rides. The MRA has not changed, so much as matured.

As I believe I have previously mentioned, to get noticed we have to move away from being a rebellious 'activist' organisation – fanaticism doesn't go down so well anymore, and work more in concert with local and federal government. That doesn't mean that the MRA will meekly cow-tow to all and sundry, it just means that we intend to meet on an equal level instead of being an almost unknown organisation.

Unknown? Ask anyone on the Toy Run who actually organises the Toy Run. 8 out of 10 won't know. And that's the next problem. We are in danger of merely becoming 'those guys who organise the Toy Run' and we can be so much more than that.

So now I come back to the crux of this article, our relevance. What we need to know, is what you, the members, want for your membership fee. Runs and rallies, sure, but what else? Given that the RAA doesn't cater for motorcyclists, how would our membership feel about the MRA becoming the RAA of Motorcyclists? Offering such services as breakdown and legal?

I could fill pages with suggestions, but I don't want to do that... I want YOU, our members, to give us your suggestions. Yep, it's that time when I exhort you to write or email us again. The MRA is YOUR organisation; tell us what services you want. Write to the MRA (SA) at GPO Box 1895, Adelaide, 5001, email the editor on editor@mrasa.asn.au or go to the Website and use the feedback page.

There are numerous ways to reach us involving very minimal effort. A small effort on your part could play a major role in the direction the MRA (SA) travels, so make the effort... and make it relevant. □

18 march 2002

centrestand



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Rallies in 2002

Well here we go again with another year of rallying around, I'll try to give out the details of as many rallies that I know about. If you know of any upcoming rallies or if your club is organising one then let us at the MRA know and we'll put them into this column.

If you've been to a rally recently and had a good time, then write up your experiences and send it into the editor, she's always looking for some new material to include in this magazine, after all it is meant to be an open forum for all motorcyclists.

Rivergum Rally, 1-3 March.

This is a Z Owners Club event located on the banks of the River Murray, signposted off the main highway between Renmark & Paringa, this is a back to basics rally so bring everything that you need to eat & drink, close to Renmark for any supplies or counter meals etc. Gymkhana Saturday arvo, burn-out competition Saturday evening, usual rally awards. Don't forget your swimming trunks, unless you want to go skinny dipping! Prepaid \$10, on the day \$12, includes badge. Info; Jeremy, (08) 8235 2463, or Tony, (08) 8298 7762.

Riverland Run, Saturday 23 March.

Once again the Veterans Motorcycle Riders Association & MRA will be supporting the Childhood Cancer Association with the annual run to Renmark, leaving the Adelaide Oval gates at 9:30 am, and should reach the oval at Renmark by about 2:30 pm. A concert with full catering (strawberries with the lot, yum!), sideshows and amusement rides, show and shine for motorcycles, free camping at the oval, plus the best fireworks show that you'll ever see. Entry \$15, includes badge. Info; David, (08) 8265 5388 or Childhood Cancer Assoc, (08) 8363 5882.

Swagman Rally, 4-5 May.

Pack up your troubles in your old kitbag, grab your swag, put on your rally hat and get up to Bower for this year's Swagperson rally. Fully catered with gymkhana (try out the greasy pole!), all the usual rally awards, and a jukebox. Beer is only \$2 a can and you get to abuse Meataxe at the bar everytime you buy one! Fantastic bonfire with something like an old bike or Volvo on top! Prepaid \$12, on the day \$15 with badge, proceeds donated to the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Info; Rhino (08) 8540 2229 or Roger (08) 8541 2834.

The Great Escape Rally, 18-19 May.

You've seen the movie that was such a hit with Steve McQueen jumping the fence on a motorbike whilst running from some of Hitler's henchmen, well it's much easier than that to get away on the Adelaide Cup weekend. Come on up to Marrabel and join the throng at Murray's place. See the MRA Committee having a nervous breakdown trying to put up the big tent, we should be able to do it this year as we've now got all the pieces! Fully catered with a gymkhana and rally awards. Prepaid \$10, late \$12, limited badges. Info; Harald, (08) 8262 2150.

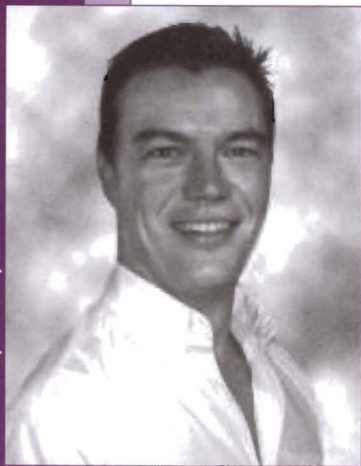
Wanbi Pub Run, 25-26 May.

This is a great event, conducted by the Z Owners, they must be really enthusiastic to organise two rallies a year, or perhaps they're just masochists! Wanbi's located on the Karoonda to Loxton road about 120 kms from Murray Bridge, and there's plenty of campsites. There's a spit roast dinner on Saturday night and a cooked breakfast on Sunday, plus a badge all included in the prepaid price of \$14, or \$17 on the day. Info; Jeremy (08) 8235 2463 or Tony (08) 8298 7762.

Hope to see you at some of these rallies,

Regards,

Leslie Dicker (Uncle Pervie to you!)

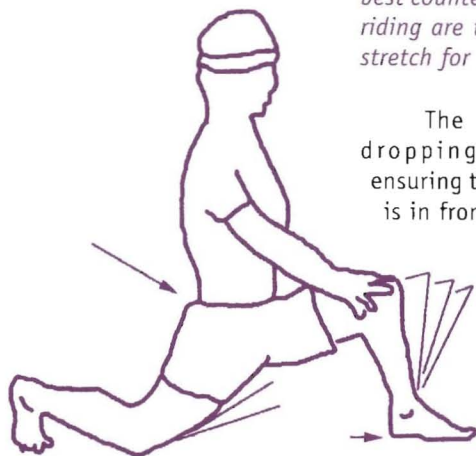


By the time you read this the New Year will have long gone, nonetheless, I hope you had a great one, and have been making the most of the better

back chat

main area – the hip flexors. As these muscle groups attach to the pelvis, they will cause soreness in the lower back, particularly once you try to stand up after riding for a while.

The two stretches that I find best counter the stiffness caused by riding are the lunge stretch, and a stretch for the quads (or 'drivers').



The lunge stretch involves dropping to one knee, and ensuring the heel of the front foot is in front of the forward knee. If you're a bit shaky in the balance department, use a chair or similar to support yourself.

Keeping your back straight (leaning forward is cheating!), slowly sink your pelvis down and forward. Be sure to relax the thigh muscles of the back leg as much as possible. You will get a tight, stretching sensation in the front of the back thigh.

weather we've been having, and getting out on your wheels.



A common problem for many riders, particularly during those longer rides, are hip and lower back complaints. It doesn't really matter what type of bike you ride either, as any rider will tend to tighten up in one

Use one hand to lift up the opposite foot, as shown. Straighten your back up, and then bring the bent knee back level with the straight one. Be sure not to lean forward when doing this, as you're cheating again.

Now, slowly pull your foot up to your bum so that you feel the stretch in the front of the bent thigh. Hold for a good 10 seconds, and then repeat for the other side. To get a little more out of this stretch, you can then take the bent knee back further behind you, before you pull the foot up to your bum. Again, don't bend forward. This helps to extend the hip joint, and gets more stretch out of the thigh.

Often, one side can seem a little tighter than the other, usually because of some rotation in the pelvis, so do a couple of extra stretches on that side. This stretch is also good for knee aches that can come during a ride as well. These are two great stretches, so it's good to use them during your rides, and not just after. In fact, you can use them any time, especially after you have been sitting for some time, either at work, or in the car as well.

Until next time, watch out for those loonies out there, pick great lines, and keep up those stretches.

Chris

'let those who ride *decide*'

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Note:

Discounts are not given on specials or with other discounts at most businesses so check before paying.

Other conditions may also apply.

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<i>Chaplain</i> Ken Whitelock	(08) 8177-1406
<i>Public Officer</i> Peter Mount	(08) 8339-5400

<i>Centrestand Staff</i>	
<i>Editor and Publisher</i>	
Ashley Knöote-Parke	0403-944-199
<i>Deputy Editor</i>	
Dale Knöote-Parke	0438-832-344
<i>Graphics and Photographer</i>	
Ken Binns	0413-338-717
<i>Advertising Officer</i>	
Colleen O'Mahony	(08) 8395-6654
<i>Webmaster</i>	
Dale Knöote-Parke	0438-832-344
<i>Mid-North Register Committee Members</i>	
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Roger Williams	(08) 8739-6564
<i>Public Relations & Publicity</i>	All Committee Members.
Postal Address:	Po Box 909 Millicent SA 5280

Produced for the
Motorcycle Rider's Association
of South Australia Incorporated

Published by
tish'n enigma
Po Box 438, St Agnes,
5072, South Australia
Tel: 0403-944-199
Fax: (08) 8289-0540
www.tishnenigma.com
e:info@tishnenigma.com

Editor: editor@mrasa.asn.au
Web Site: http://www.mrasa.asn.au
webmaster@mrasa.asn.au

Public Officer: Peter Mount

MRA (SA): GPO Box 1895
Adelaide SA 5001
Tel: (08) 8262 2150
Fax : (08) 8262 2151
E-mail: mrasa@mrasa.asn.au
Print Post Approval Publication
NO. PP: 530028/00014

Cover Picture
Relevance by Ken Binns, KGB Photography

Publication: Quarterly
March, June, September, December
The MRA SA Inc. is a member of the
Australian Motorcycle Council (AMC)

For all advertising enquiries contact
Colleen O'Mahony

- Subscription gratis to members.
- Contributions welcome.
- Photographs welcome:
- Opinions: contributors and advertisers opinions and assertions do not necessarily reflect the view of the MRA
- Deadline: 8 weeks prior to publication.

Printed by
Hyde Park Press,
4 Deacon Avenue, Richmond
5033, South Australia
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