

CENTRESTAND

JUNE 2007



let those who ride decide

The journal of the Motorcycle Riders' Association of SA Inc. Printpost approved No. PP:530028/00014

IN THIS ISSUE : 65 ROSES, KINGSTON WEEKEND, MRA FORUM



M.R.A.
MOTORCYCLE RIDERS'
ASSOCIATION OF SA INC.

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**General Meetings: 7 pm, 4th Monday in Jan, April,
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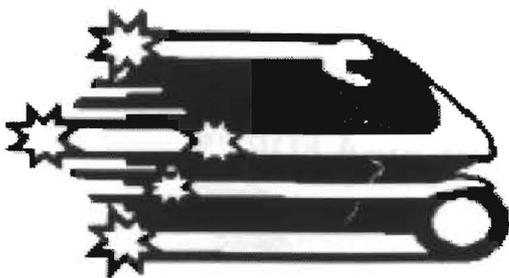
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COVER PHOTO: Kingston Run by Jock

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EDITORIAL

Since the last issue of Centrestand I've been taking note of how motorcycling has been presented in the news generally. There have been all the stories about outlaw motorcyclist activities that have been hard to miss – all negative. It was also put forward that criminal activity by members of outlaw clubs could be curbed if we just passed a law that prohibited them from wearing club colours – whatever they are. What an outrageous idea; may as well ban Harleys. This idea promotes guilt by association. But hey, so what, they must all be guilty of something.

While we're at it, let's think about how far this could be pushed. There are various Christian biker clubs whose members also wear similar club identification. Some MRA members and Ulyssians wear their insignia proudly too. It wouldn't take much for some over-zealous public servant to interpret such a law in a way that it wasn't meant for. But hey, they're only bikers.

In France it is illegal to wear a hijab or any symbol of your religion to school. This is not something that our governments want to countenance. However, they will consider an idea that takes away our civil liberties regarding another freedom of expression. This is something we need to think about carefully, so watch the press for developments and have your say about it.

Another item that concerned me was about a motorcyclist using a pedestrian/bicycle track as a short cut. He hit a drain, came off and was killed. This was totally unnecessary however you look at it. Use it as an eye opener. Remember, one false move and it could be you, so be sensible, ride defensively, wear your safety gear and don't think it won't ever happen to you.

There was also an ill informed letter to the Editor in the Adelaide Advertiser on 31 May complaining about the lack of safety equipment on motorcycles ie no seat belts, airbags, ABS or doors. Oh no! Now everyone will know that we don't have them. Except for ABS. Some bikes have been fitted with ABS for years, but then, not all cars have ABS fitted, do they? I did say ill-informed, but the letter makes good copy and sounds good to those who know little about bikes, and makes us all sound like death-defying idiots for not having doors etc. So thanks to the Advertiser for continuing to beat that drum.

On the other hand, there was the great story of the 'a Praia da Luz' motorcycle club in Portugal which came out in force to help in the search for Madeleine McCann, the four year old girl kidnapped from her hotel room. One positive take on motorcycling. Maybe we should have a Toy Run every month to make up for the rest of the reporting.

Ride on, read on, write in

Peter Mount

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Phil Mc Clelland

I recently received an email from Jock Rogan, our Social Coordinator and organiser of the SAMRATS. Jock had written a SAMRATS newsletter about that weekend's ride thru the Adelaide Hills.

What caught my attention wasn't the route or the numbers of bikes. I already knew the weather had been lousy. I was captured by the way Jock spoke of the enthusiasm and camaraderie shared by the riders on a cold and wet winter's day of riding. Damn, I wished I had made time to be with them. The SAMRATS activities are fun regardless of the season, and that is, for me, the quintessential reason my motorbike is not just a cheaper way to commute to work.

The MRA is an association that works on behalf of all motorcyclists. Our core role is to be a political voice. The current state government appears to view people who ride motorbikes as being antisocial criminals and a threat to the community. The 300 or so members of the targeted biker clubs are only occasionally identified as being a small minority of the people who own a motorbike. We know that we are not the motorcyclists being spoken of when there is another tirade about people with motorbikes. The target of the press conference, the public, gains the perception that to have a motorcycle and belong to a club / association is to be antisocial. The politicians and media need to be reminded that in the 2001 Census (2006 is not yet available) South Australian had 27,600 motorbikes and many riders are in clubs and associations.

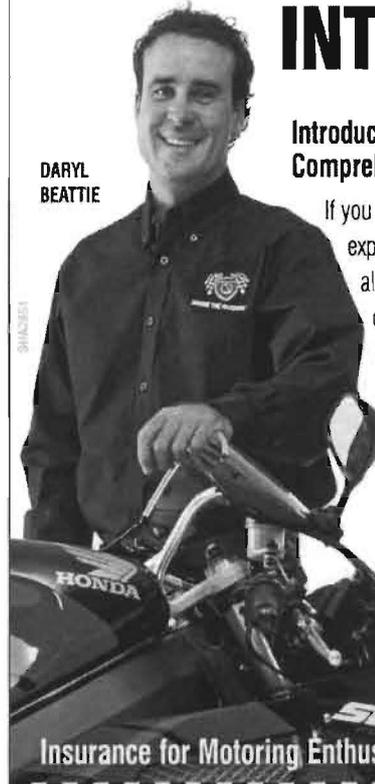
I wish they could see first hand what an association like ours is all about. The SAMRATS organise our social activities. Saturday or Sunday rides through the hills to longer trips with destinations from the Barossa to Kingston. We have our Toy Run committee raising \$250,000 of toys for needy families at Christmas time. The 4B's have been visiting injured motorcyclists for over 25 years in our hospitals. The visits are part social and support and part accident research data collection. The 4B's recently donated \$700 to the RAH. This will be used to start a DVD library on the 3rd floor of the North Wing (orthopaedics etc). We have people researching motorcycle safety and attending the State Government Motorcycle Road Safety Taskforce meetings and let's not forget the fund raising for worthy charities such as the Royal Flying Doctors Service and the 65 Roses Foundation (Cystic Fibrosis).

I hope that you, as a member of the MRA, are as proud of your association. I am.

Stay Upright
Phil McClelland

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UPCOMING RALLIES

13-15 July Radiata Rally, Southend SA MRASA
South East Register \$15/18

Frank 08 8765 1030, Crazi 08 8724 7759
(see page 9 for the Ad)

17-19 August Wombat Rally, Warnertown SA
Entry \$15 includes breakfast

Graham 0407 618 071 Mick 0417 846 668

29 Sept -1 October Oasis Rally, Paruna SA
contact Lerch 0432 284 529

5-7 October, Patterson's Treffen, Spear Creek
Tourism & Training Centre BMW Club \$18 reg forms and accommodation info at www.bmwocsa.org.au

WILD WORDS – use 'em

esplanade – to attempt an explanation while drunk
inoculate – to take coffee intravenously
glibido – all talk and no action
ignoramus – a person who's both stupid and an asshole
osteoporosis – a degenerate disease
bozone – the substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating

TOY RUN REPORT

by Paul Morgan, Coordinator

If you are interested in getting involved with the organisation of this great event, then give me a call on 0401 145 541.

Paul Morgan
Toy Run Coordinator

MRA MEETINGS COMING UP

July 9 Committee Meeting
July 16 Toy Run Committee Meeting
July 30 General Meeting
August 7 4Bs Meeting
August 13 Committee Meeting
August 20 Toy Run Meeting
September 4 4Bs Meeting
September 10 Committee Meeting
September 17 Toy Run Meeting
September 24 AGM



WORK - This is why you do it!

If you'd like a copy of this and more inspirational biker photos email me at haraldhl@adam.com.au and I'll send you what I've got. Unfortunately no website!

🏍️ Good News! LAMS finally comes into law in Victoria. But not until July 1 2008. Gee, you'd think that such a good idea would be worth doing now, especially as most of the other states (NSW, ACT, Tasmania, SA), have been using it successfully. It seems that there is some problem about which bikes should be on the list. Well, we've got a list that they can have ... for free.

BITS & PIECES

🏍️ The MRASA AGM will be held on Monday 24th September at the Director's Hotel Gouger Street, starting at 7.00pm. All positions will be open for election and some Constitutional matters will be presented to be discussed and voted on.

🏍️ LAMS NEWS – There have been some bikes added to the LAMS (Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme) list. They are :

Aprilia	Scarabeo 400
Aprilia	Scarabeo 500
Kawasaki	KLR650

For the complete listing of 278 approved bikes visit :
www.transport.sa.gov.au/education/training/ridersafe.

🏍️ Please note that on the first Sunday of every month a SAMRATS run will be meeting at the BP West Terrace at 9.30am. The next will be on July 15.

Subject: Stolen Bike - Red 1997 Ducati 750SS
4pm Wed 13 June – Central Adelaide

On Wednesday 13 June at 3.55 pm, a Red 1997 Ducati 750SS was stolen from outside the Bike Factory in Gouger Street, Central Adelaide. South Australian Rego number **TIK-189**. The bike was in almost immaculate condition, owner's pride and joy since new. This picture is of a SIMILAR bike.



Think RED!! TIK-189

If anyone sees or hears of this bike or any bits from such a bike being offered for sale anywhere, please contact South Australian Police on 131444

65 ROSES REPORT By Jock Rogan

May 26 saw the culmination of the efforts of LJ Hooker and The Garage, Strathalbyn, with the support of the MRA. Some 40 motorcycles raised about \$6,500 for Cystic Fibrosis Research. What a great effort. Many other riders called past to drop off donations or wish us well.

This event was the first of its kind for many reasons. It was the first time, that I know of that business have approached the MRA for support in this way. It was also the first time motorcycling has tried to solicit donations for charity in this way. And finally it is the first time that a community has rallied together to invite motorcycles to run an event within their community.

After the recent publicity of the inaugural Ridden-On Ride we were invited to form a committee to raise \$10,000 (well you have to have a target and this seemed like reaching for the sky) for CF research. This indicates the level of interest the community has for the MRA as the representatives of motorcycling and that there is a significant degree of community support for riding in SA. After some discussion, we felt the best way to raise this amount was to ask riders to seek sponsorship from their immediate community. We felt if each rider could get \$10 from ten people then it would give them the entrance donation of \$100.

I really liked this idea. It meant that many, many people who don't ride or own a motorcycle could be involved. I also liked the idea of riders proudly acclaiming they ride a motorcycle to business mates and friends. In fact one rider, on the day, told me that one of his work mates was astonished to learn that he rode. We can but hope that this individual will now think twice before cutting off a rider - in case it is his work mate! To make this event special we approached many businesses in Strathalbyn and put them on the spot. As Strathalbyn is a Mecca for motorcycles on the weekend we felt this was a great opportunity for local businesses to show how much they appreciate riders! Their response was fantastic! They supported the event to the tune of about \$1500 in prizes for riders, food to feed the riders and with all the little things you need to make this type of activity work. For this I would like to extend the thanks of the MRA to the community of Strathalbyn.

On the day itself, we had a street closed off in Strathalbyn for the motorcycles to gather. Coffee and munchies were available for those who arrived early. At 10.00 am we rode around the Fleurieu Peninsula. The ride, of some 250 kms, was a combination of observation trial and treasure hunt with a total of 73 questions to answer. A bag lunch was provided and we thank Trimview of Langhorne Creek for offering us the use of their facilities. The bag lunch was greatly appreciated by all on the day and soft drink or bottled water and tea and coffee was available to wash down the meal. The ride continued after lunch and most riders arrived back at Strathalbyn by 4.30 pm.

The only unplanned event was a route redirection due to the Police closing off a road. Even this was resolved without incident. Though we do apologise for those with a road bike who were instructed by SAPOL to follow a dirt road! At the end of the event a barbeque was provided and prizes were awarded. We are proud to note that Trevor Brown raised the most money on the day with a total of just under \$700. Well done Trevor! Mike Griffin deserves a mention raising \$500. We do feel that had he converted it to notes before riding up the hill he would have got better economy from his bike. \$500 in \$1 coins certainly raised a few eyebrows at the check in table!

I would also like to give a special mention to Hamish on his 125cc scooter. As well as riding to and from Strathalbyn he completed the whole 250 kms on his scooter! Well done sir! Efforts like this go a long way to change opinions of scooters within our community.

Well we didn't reach our target of \$10,000 but between what the community contributed and the riders raised we feel we got pretty close! Riders had a great day and we have lots of suggestions for the event next year. Many people have asked to run this route again so we plan to ride it in July - but without the questions and supplied food! We plan to ask Phil Cole (CEO CF SA) to bring a tin along and collect some gold coins!

We would like to thank all the riders and their sponsors who supported this event, the community of Strathalbyn for making this event possible and all the organisers who worked so hard on the day. I would like to thank Channel Seven Adelaide for the coverage they gave this event on the day, donating footage to our archive and giving permission to make the footage available off our web site. To anyone I may have forgotten - Thank you!

Photos can be found here:

http://www.mrasa.asn.au/gallery/view_album.php?set_albumName=album51

Ride report can be found here:

<http://www.mrasa.asn.au/pdf/RR070526.pdf>



THIS GUY GOT THE PRIZE FOR THE UNTIDIEST ANSWER BOOK Photo by Steve

SAMRATS

By Jock Rogan, Social Events Liaison

On the weekend of June 16, SAMRATS rode to Kingston SE to have a "Christmas Feast in Winter" style activity. This was the first time we have tried this type of event and we are overwhelmed by the success of this inaugural event. Even though many of us started the day in temperatures below zero. All that was missing was the snow!

At 9.30 am eleven bikes gathered at the BP Glenunga Service Station and one car with a rider's family. Riding off at 10.00 am for Kingston SE. We pulled off the SE Freeway at Mount Barker and followed the Princess Highway for a period to add a few bends to the trip.

At Tailem Bend we were joined by two more riders for the weekend. We rode to Meningie for lunch and it was as we entered Meningie we encountered a slight drizzle. The day had been fine up until then. After fuelling up the riders and the bikes we left Meningie and the weather improved. As we rode down the Coorong one could not wish for better riding conditions. Though the riders didn't like the cold the engines seemed to thrive.



We entered Kingston just as the cold was starting to bite through our gear. We received a warm welcome at the Royal Mail Hotel. Mark, Bronwyn and their staff quickly made us feel at home and the preparations they made for us were outstanding. Not only had they prepared a special menu for us at a discount, they had also prepared a special room for us with all the trappings of Christmas, complete with Bon Bons and tree! The meals were gratefully received and arrived hot and of a generous size. After the meal riders enjoyed the football on the big

screen or games of pool. Others chatted whilst enjoying a beverage.

Everyone claimed to have had a great night's sleep in the rooms upstairs and we appreciated the locked compound in which to park our bikes.



On the Sunday we rode back to Adelaide via Keith, stopping at the famous Keith Bakery for lunch. Yes, it was cold, but it is winter! Everyone who came had great fun. With the right gear to wear riding a motorcycle in winter can be a great experience! Thank you to Mark, Bronwyn and staff at the Royal Mail Hotel, Kingston SE for making our weekend special.

Photos on this page by Jock and are available here: http://www.mrasa.asn.au/gallery/view_album.php?set_albumName=album55

Check the website for more SAMRATS info., news and reports.

MOTORCYCLE FRIENDLY COUNCIL

News has just come in from Tassie that the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council has declared itself a motorcycle friendly municipality in what could be a first in Australia. This is mainly due to the efforts of Councilor Bertrand Cadart a well known motorcyclist of the area (Honda Goldwing).

Glamorgan Spring Bay takes in part of the east coast of the island around Bicheno where they get those fantastic crayfish. One more reason to get down there. The Council saw the benefits in encouraging motorcyclists to make the shire a holiday destination and are looking for suggestions as to how to be more friendly. So tell them at www.gsbc.tas.gov.au or email to motorcycle@freycinet.tas.gov.au

MRA FORUM By Jock Rogan

Thanks to the hard work of Paul Kuhn and his helpers the MRA now has an efficient and respected forum available via our web site. It is hard to describe a forum in a few words to those who have never visited one, but the best I can come up with is an interactive "letters to the editor" column.

On the forum, you can "post" ideas or comments and this allows others to respond. Being on the internet means that people across the country or across the planet can join in on the dialogue. It can be as simple as help on bike maintenance or finding other riders to join you on an outing. For a political organisation like the MRA this means that we can discuss issues that we are passionate about, like road safety or road maintenance and anyone anywhere in this state can be involved! Providing you can access the internet you can be join in!

To join the forum, firstly go to the web site. Then on the menu on the left click on the "Forum" link. It is wise to explore the forum in the first instance by reading some of the articles. Ideas are grouped together in "threads". Hence there is a thread for the Scooter Club, SAMRATS, 4B's etc.

Free membership is required to add comments and your MRA number is requested as a simple form of identification. Providing you use your MRA number aliases are allowed. Some simple rules exist mainly to ensure everything operates with an air of mutual respect. Moderators will edit or delete items that offend or criticise the writer rather than the idea.

Links to the forum can provide an interactive discussion from the web site. This was efficiently used with the 65 Roses event where members could ask questions if the instructions weren't clear. It also helped provide meeting points for riders riding up from the city for the event. Scooter riders frequently use it to organise riders for various events from movie nights to planning rides on Friday nights or Sunday afternoon.

Any enquiries can be directed to the moderator at forum@mrasa.asn.au if you need help or have a question about access.

KEY TRIBULATIONS by Bob Leske

I have had a very bad run these last few days. First losing my wallet on Sunday and then lost my only bike key at college on Wednesday completely ruining my plans to finish a late essay that day. The worst part was that the RAA couldn't get a locksmith that would do a ZX12R key nor could they find a dedicated bike tow truck. What resulted was the "car" tow truck driver putting down his tray to a 30degree angle attaching the steering locked forks to his pulley and dragging the bike up a greasy patch until it was on the truck. He then proceeded to tie it down using heavily greased car ties on the triple clamps cutting in (unavoidably) onto the fairing.

Unfortunately Boltons were not able to immediately help and the locksmiths were threatening a \$160 call out fee. Needless to say that with all this stress including being told by the locksmith group to "leave the bike there, we're busy and may get there tomorrow" meaning the bike would have been left over night in Victoria Street opposite the Torrens I was at the point where I was on the verge of checking into the RAH psych unit myself. Yes folks I am here as a patient today, find me an L size white jacket with the extra long arms and give me all the benzos you've got!

Yesterday the locksmith came around. Two hours and another locksmith van later they still couldn't get the ignition key to work and left at 5pm to get a blank from Boltons to match up with their existing stock. Apparently the key is of a non standard width. I am at a loss as to how much this is going to cost or how much more disruption is going to be caused, but stay tuned for the next instalment. I guess the lesson is to have lots of spares and wear the initial expense of getting them cut. Be warned!

Needless to say they are coming back today some time, probably to change the locks on my house as a repo initiative to cover their fees. But at least I will be able to ride my bike!

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

Info just in : Go to the MRA website to view an edited video of the Channel Seven news article on the 65 Roses Run. Just one more service from the MRASA and friends.

THE NOT THE GREAT ESCAPE RALLY 2007 by Harald Lindemann

As the Great Escape Rally wasn't going to officially be on this year for various reasons, some of us thought that this would be too bad and decided to camp out at the site anyway. A notice was put in the Centrestand and on the website as an official SAMRATS event, permission was gained from the landowner and Kiwi and I waited to see what would happen. A couple of phone enquiries later and it was clear that there would be more than just the two of us there.



Green Triumph & Custom Built Trailer (left)

It was fine day on Saturday the 12th of May as I rocked up to the rally site following the signs from the road and found 3 bikes and a couple of vans had arrived before me. All in all we had half a dozen bikes and the same number of 4-wheelers turn up to our Not the Great Escape Rally – about 17 people.

Everybody brought all their own everything and made do very well. I immediately brewed a cup of tea and took my time putting up the tent. Most of the time I just sat in my chair enjoying the quiet and occasionally going off to another camp fire to have a chat to folks.

I took time to hand out badges to people – a special strike for the occasion, which seemed to be appreciated by all.

A couple of riders from the BMW club turned up late in the afternoon with rally flyers and one guy from Broken Hill (I forget his name but he had a joke for every conversation.) arrived who came down because this was the rally weekend – he didn't know that it wasn't on. So the folks with the green

Triumph and matching you-bewt trailer fed him from their bottomless camp oven.

The night was just as relaxing as the day starting with a few ales, some light coloured plonk and a feed of sausages and winding on with more plonk of a different colour, some good conversation and some fine rum courtesy of Mike.

The next morning was as pleasant as the day before. A cup of tea, a scratch breakfast with Kiwi and we slowly started packing up. It was great, no marquee to pull down, no truck to load and no unloading back into the shed of all the MRA gear once back in Adelaide. What a difference. Just load the bike, have another cuppa and a chat, check that the fires are all out and head for home.



The Mighty BMW Shadow (far rear)

Everyone agreed that a back to basics MRA rally was pretty cool and that if the rally proper can't be held next year for any reason, then we'll quite happily do it all again on our own.

See you there, Harald

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LETTERS

Our mate Les forwarded us some correspondence about an issue that got up his nose and one that he thinks should be clogging everyone's.

LETTER TO THE ADVERTISER (not printed)

Dear Sir,
I'm a motorcyclist with many decades of riding experience and I wish to register my annoyance at the statement by Mr Ferraretto (Advertiser 29/5) that the electrically propelled death trap that he is trying to market in this country is safer than riding a motorcycle.

It would be a much better practice if the media were to obtain informed comments from licensed motorcyclists about such matters rather than to publish opinions from members of the public who are not licensed to ride motorcycles.

Yours truly,
Leslie Dicker.

LETTER TO TWO WHEELS (printed)

Subject: Anti motorcycling articles in the Adelaide Advertiser.

The Editor,
Dear Jeremy,
I'm a regular reader of 2 Wheels as well as other motorcycle magazines. I've been riding since I started work in 1957 and I currently ride a ZZR 600 and go to rallies, Ulysses events, MotoGP, SBK etc. Over the decades I've been a member of motorcycle lobby groups such as FAM, MRA etc as I've always put a high priority on safe riding. About every 4 or 5 years I take a motorcycle skills course to improve my abilities and to eradicate any bad habits.

No doubt you're aware of the regular periods of anti-motorcycling rants in the mainstream press. The latest round is a good example of this kind of nonsense.

The Tue 29 May edition of the Adelaide Advertiser had a full page article on the failure of a 48 km/h crash test of the Reva electric car. The importer of the Reva a Mr Adrian Ferraretto stated that "it's safer than a motorbike."

The edition of Thu 31 May printed a letter by a Mr Geoff Appelt in which he complains that motorcycles are on the roads despite not having "seat belts, airbags, ABS, stability control or even doors."

I've found that complaining to the publication concerned about this kind of rubbish usually gets nowhere. They don't seem to pay any attention to those of us with the license to ride, so we get no right of reply. I've now reached the conclusion that the attitude of the mainstream press to motorcycling must be changed through administrative action by some tribunal similar to the ACCC.

I don't know if there is such an organisation, if there is then I think that it's time that we as motorcyclists take this course of action.

Yours truly,
Leslie Dicker.

Another danger

HOW ironic it is that governments and car manufacturers strive to raise the level of safety equipment in motor cars while, at the same time, we permit on our roads, exceptionally powerful vehicles with no seat belts, airbags, ABS, stability control or even doors. They are called motorcycles.

■ GEOFF APPELT, Greenwith.

Les has got a good point, but it may be that the papers do not necessarily have it in for motorcyclists, it's just that we make such good copy whatever they say about us, so they feel that they can say whatever they like without fear of contradiction. So Les is being contrary and I encourage all of you out there to do the same whenever you read something in the press that libels motorcyclists or our lifestyle. Write in and tell them what gets up your nose and why, particularly when non-motorcyclists sound off about motorcycling. Parp – blow your own trumpet.. (Ed)

21ST RADIATA RALLY
JULY 14TH - 16TH 2006

WE ARE MOVING AWAY FROM HOME
FOR A SEA CHANGE TO SOUTHWEST
BETWEEN BEACHPORT AND MILLICENT
GOOD TRACK (NO WET PATCHES)
FULLY CATERED
(FAMOUS RALLY BURGER STILL AVAILABLE)
WEBBER MEAT AND SALADS SATURDAY NIGHT
GYMKHANA AND RALLY AWARDS
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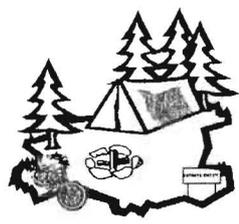
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HOW'S YOUR GPS? by Harald Lindemann

There has been some interesting discussion at AMC regarding regulations allowing inboard video units. On the face of it there may be a problem with allowing video screens in the form of GPS units in front of the driver, visible and manipulable while the vehicle is in motion.

Are they are a driver distraction of the same type as a mobile telephone or a useful and essential driving tool?

Guy Stanford of the AMC says that ARR Rule 299 "is unable to keep pace with technology and continues to allow a mobile 'phone or PDA that can also display a GPS map to be used by a driver and have the video display in front of the driver because it is a "drivers aid" - see below. The structure of this Rule is hopelessly inadequate and does not address the topic of "driver distraction" at all."

ARR299 (edited) Television receivers and visual display units in motor vehicles :

(1) A driver must not drive a motor vehicle that has a television receiver or visual display unit in or on the vehicle operating while the vehicle is moving, or is stationary but not parked, if any part of the image on the screen:

(a) is visible to the driver from the normal driving position; or

(b) is likely to distract another driver.

*(2) This rule **does not apply** to the driver if:*

(a) the driver is driving a bus and the visual display unit is, or displays, a destination sign or other bus sign; or

(b) the visual display unit is, or is part of, a driver's aid; or

(c) the driver or vehicle is exempt from this rule under another law of this jurisdiction.

Examples of driver's aids :

1 Closed-circuit television security cameras.

2 Dispatch systems.

3 Navigational or intelligent highway and vehicle system equipment.

4 Rearview screens.

5 Ticket-issuing machines.

6 Vehicle monitoring devices.

What do you think? I know that we here at the MRA are pretty hot on drivers who are too busy talking on the phone to attend to the road and would support finding ways to convince them all to at least invest in hands free sets. But are these other visual gadgets just that or are they joining the raft of must have electronic essentials for travelling to work or on holiday like the coffee maker, the shaver, palm pilots, blackberries, strawberries and electronic watermelons that are designed to distract us one way or another?

Write in to tell us what you think or log on to the MRA website and have your say on the FORUM page. With your ideas we can respond to these issues a lot better than without them.

WE SHOULD BE SO LUCKY, LUCKY, LUCKY by Harald L.

It's interesting that when the road toll is up then we (collectively riders and drivers) are accused of being careless and irresponsible lawbreakers who should be hammered with new draconian legislation that takes away our ability to be on the road, empties our wallets and generally makes us all feel like we're being treated as the bad guys.

And when the road toll is down. Is there a different story? Is there a recognition that we are becoming better drivers and riders, more law-abiding, that the various safety campaigns are working? The police don't think so. Assistant Police Commissioner Grant Stevens says that the recent fatal free Easter period was because "...we've been very lucky...".⁽¹⁾ That SA drivers were being tolerant and patient was recognised but more was made of the numbers of extreme risk takers caught by police.

So I would interpret this, that it seems that the legislation isn't working because it is the extremists that are the cause of the problem and they're not going to take any account of the laws anyway. Adelaide drivers, on the whole, have always been reasonably patient and tolerant in my experience (as opposed to careless and irresponsible), so really, nothing much has changed, except that for some reason we are luckier than we were before Easter.

Is SAPOL going to continue with this run of luck, or is there more that they can draw upon when things look like road toll might be going bad. We need to know, because I for one would prefer to rely on things a bit more substantial like safer roads and signage, driver education and police presence at danger spots (not cameras). To my mind luck is vastly overrated as a safety measure.

(1) Adelaide Advertiser 11 April 2007

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