

SPOKE & PISTON

Vol.10 No. 6

From The Chair...



Nov/Dec 2005



Dear Fellow Riders,

Festive Season and Christmas 2005

The 2005 riding year is just about over. It has been another great year of shared riding memories with friends and members of our Club. These memories remain with us and in a large way add greatly to our enjoyment of life and punctuate the mundane Monday to Friday week in the office except for the daily commuter rider. The events list for December still holds the promise of more great riding opportunities and includes the annual highlights of Clarens (Eastern Free State) and Sabie area (Mpumalanga).

The past year has provided good times and rides and we should take a moment to reflect on how blessed we are to be able to enjoy riding in our beautiful land with members and friends. I personally and, on behalf of your Committee, thank you all, as members (now +- 250), for the support and participation given during the past year. Further, we extend our best wishes for the Festive Season ahead and wish you and your families a blessed and peaceful Christmas and a rewarding 2006.

Accidents

I wish us to remember the passing of our friend and companion Charles Haumann, who died on 22 May this year. I know that we who have ridden and spent time with Charles will be missing his unique way, humour, person and presence. Charles will be up there looking down on us, wishing us well and I believe that feeling will be mutual. Good riding, good friend. I also want to remember our members, Gerrie Mans, Johann and Marinda Bauermeister who have had serious accidents previously and this year. Their fortitude, strength of character and grasping life and living it in time of adversity, is an example to our fellow member and rider community. We wish you all blessing while on your road to full recovery.

Bruce & Wendy Meyers

We are still fortunate to have the enormous support and assistance that our Club receives from Bavarian Motorcycles, now in a wonderful new facility, and their dedicated and knowledgeable team. This support includes: technical advice, servicing and repair work, emergency recovery of bikes, meals at our social functions and encouraging new members to participate in club affairs and quite honestly, almost anything we ask for. For the support and service we thank Bruce, Wendy, Simon and their team (including Willie and Ernest for their vigilant eye on our bikes and cars while attending meetings).

Communications

Thank you to Henri Heyns for continuing to serve our Club by editing and producing the quality Spoke & Piston newsletter, which continues to provide crucial communication with our members who are not "connected". Brian Cannoo has developed a website, which is the envy of our biking community. This media helps to hold our Club together and is indispensable in our modern "turbo" life.

With best wishes for sheer riding pleasure.
Kindest regards, Mike.

Classic charity cycle race for free on a toll road.

(Mike Hennessy)

On Sunday 13 November 2005, the Bakwena Post Office 100 kms Super Classic Cycle Race was a first-time for Pretoria in 2005 and also the first time that a 50 kms stretch of toll road has been completely closed to ordinary traffic. This race, as a charity sporting event, took place from 05:30 until 12:00, with the proceeds going to CANSA (The Cancer Association of South Africa), whose objectives are to propagate and continue the fight against cancer in South Africa.

Our Club was asked to provide 20 marshals, on motorcycles, for the race to assist the race officials in controlling the route and in particular to “encourage” the elite (professional) rider group not to cross the white line on the single section of the highway.

Well, a merry band of members and “THINK BIKE” supporters gathered at 04:45 at our usual Club departure meeting point. Having donned our international orange marshal vests, we departed to make the Doornpoort tollgate before closure time at 05:30. The commute was fairly uneventful as we gathered at the toll gate waiting for the early-morning organisation to ease into life, meaning that that time on a Sunday morning is still nighttime for a lot of people. However, the first group of riders started at about 06:00, but not before a high-speed group of four motorcycle riders, including Brian Cannoo and Renier Jordaan, cleared the race route (50 kms out and in) to ensure that the road was free of vehicles belonging to the public. What a pleasure for these speed freaks! There was an implied ‘no speed restriction’ liberty applied to the scanning of the route. This was borne out by the fact that at least one ‘Think Bike’ rider had to refuel after the 100 kms sprint. (Of course the Hayabusa, with no respectable throttle-bodies, was not a BMW). Very exciting stuff!

The total entry was in the region of 2500 riders, which was considered very good for this first-time short-notice event. Then the real work began. Our marshals supported the official cars (two per car). Trying to control the riders, espe-

cially the “elite” group, was like trying to herd a group of blind, deaf and dumb chickens along a garden path. (The exception lay in the pointed four-letter utterances directed at us for trying to restrict the short-cut bend riding line).

Our task of control was indeed a job and a half. I recall having to adjust my left-hand mirror on at least three occasions after having been ridden into. One cyclist rode into the front wheel of Dirk Alberts’s motorcycle and took a tumble. Some nasty grazes and a buckled cycle was the result. A support bakkie came to the rescue with the dual purpose as both tow-truck and ambulance. Fortunately, Dirk was able to avoid a fall himself by putting out his leg at speed and pulling an already damaged groin muscle. The competitiveness of the elite group was something to experience and makes one understand the “do or die” attitude of the professional cyclists in the Tour de France and other Formula One cycle events.

The speeds attained on the mainly flat fast route were between 45 and 65 kms/hr, quite frightening when one considers the number of riders in the groups at 100+, all jockeying for position and applying strategic maneuvers constantly. The winner of the tandem class completed the 100 kms. race in 2 hrs. 6 mins., an average of 47,6 kms/hr.

There was, unfortunately one fatality among the cyclists. A father of over 60 years old, riding in tandem with his 14 year old son, suffered a heart attack while on his cycle and passed away on site. Other than that, the usual incidents happened with the medical team providing running repairs to grazes and attending to other physical needs.

The after-party was held on a site near the Wonderboom Airport with the customary festivity, refreshment, food, entertainment, socialising and prize giving.

This was a great day all round, an interesting event, with a good turn-out of sporting people supporting CANSA. The event will be repeated in 2006 and the Club will be invited to participate again. My personal thanks go to our Club members who assisted so ably in this worthwhile cause.

Official opening of Bavarian Motorcycles` new showroom

(Henri Heyns)

Friday 21 October 2005 saw the official inauguration of Bruce Meyer's new BMW showroom in Vermeulen Street Pretoria, in almost exactly the same spot as what his 'old' place used to be. Situated on the banks of the Apies River, the new Bavarian Motorcycles looks the part of being the leading purveyor of BMW motorcycles in the country.

After over four years of negotiations with the Tshwane City Council, owner of a semi-derelict dwelling on the corner in Ockerse Street, things started coming right for Bruce. Once permission to go ahead was obtained and building plans approved, the old house was demolished and in double quick time the new showroom erected.

The opening was attended by dignitaries from the Tshwane City Council, BMW South Africa, Committee members of the BMW Motorcycle Club of Pretoria, the Press, Bavarian staff members and specially invited guests.

Lachlan Harris, General Manager Motorcycles for BMW in South Africa, in declaring the building officially open congratulated Bruce on the sparkling new premises as well as on his achievement in putting BMW motorcycles under the leaders in motorcycle sales in the country. Bavarian Motorcycles, top seller among the 22 dealers, was looking forward to selling 300 new units in coming year, he said. Roads are becoming more congested each year with the enormous traffic build-up taking place, causing commuters and other road users to turn increasingly to an alternative for the traditional four-wheeled system of transport. This is obviously where the motorcycle comes into its own as the recent accelerated increase in sales have shown.

In sharing with Bavarian Motorcycles their joy at the exciting achievements thus far, Lachlan said that he was proud of the new building and everyone therein for playing such a magnificent role in promoting the image of the BMW marque. He wished them all the best for the future and anticipates them going from strength to strength.

Steven Mokgalape, City Councillor for Ward 58, also expressed delight at having such an attractive building on the fringes of Central Pretoria. He further spoke about the moves afoot of re-developing the Inner City and restoring it to its former glory. He stated that the Inner City is a place of strategic significance, not only because it is the hub of the City itself, but also from a national and international perspective. It is generally acknowledged though that this piece of valuable real estate is not functioning as it should from an environmental, economic, and social point of view. In order to remedy the situation the Council is developing a strategy to lay the foundation for its repositioning and regeneration. The extended Bavarian Motorcycles premises falls within the area under review. Bruce Meyers is to be congratulated for taking the initiative in having a derelict house removed and erecting in its place a modern structure of which the City and its inhabitants can truly be proud. Bruce's new place could be seen to be a first step taken as well as setting an example in achieving the overall regeneration objectives.



Bruce, Wendy and Lachlan caught by the camera.

Bruce and his charming wife Wendy, wanted to make the inauguration unique and decided on a combination of all things good, in the form of art, music, engineering, architecture and of course last but not least, good food.

The first of the good-things-in-life combination was art. In this regard an exhibition of photographic art work was displayed by Koos de Lende, originally from Holland. This artist has a vivid imagination and seems to be able to turn almost any scene into a work of art through the lens of his camera, whether he works in colour or black and white. What captured my fancy was a photo art image of an old

Hudson motorcar (like one my late father used to have), lying long-abandoned, without wheels and utterly ruined by years of neglect, in a ditch against a backdrop of a stark Namaqualand landscape in high summer at sunset. Pity I couldn't scrape together the necessary funds to buy it!

For music, the guests were entertained to the soothing sounds of a string quartet which gave a sterling display of musical skill, playing melodies that have become popular through the years. Such was the foot-tapping quality of, especially the waltzes played, that surprisingly no gentleman took the nearest lady for a dance. Such a move would certainly not have been out of place.



Fiddlers all, doing their thing in musical style.

The engineering and architecture parts of the equation deserve no special mention because the range of BMW motorcycles displayed in the magnificent new showroom bears brilliant testimony to how well good things go together.



Please may I have this bike for Christmas? The plea comes from Connor Smulders and is directed at granddad Franz Gschwandtner.

Needless to say, the eating and drinking components of the combination were also well catered for. There was enough solid and liquid sustenance of every description to have delighted and satisfied even the most fastidious of palettes. No wonder that the evening's

proceedings carried on until late with everyone showing extreme reluctance to calling it a day.

Finally, now that all the excitement of the grand opening has died down, Bruce Meyers and all those around him must get back to the grindstone to show that the accolades showered upon them for past performance and the stated vision of big things yet to come, will not have been in vain. This will be no easy task but with Bruce at the helm and the capable and enthusiastic crew to man the sails, Bavarian Motorcycles will go from strength to strength to the wonderment of all, friend and foe alike. Go for it guys. We know you can!

How to please a woman

To make a woman truly happy, a man must be very rich, honest, generous, warm, attentive, gallant, intelligent, funny, creative, tender, strong, understanding, tolerant, prudent, ambitious, capable, courageous, determined, true, dependable and passionate.

It goes without saying that he must also be an electrician, a carpenter, plumber, mechanic, decorator, stylist, gynaecologist, psychologist, pest exterminator, psychiatrist, healer, good listener and an excellent organiser. Of course, he must also be a good friend, companion, lover, brother, father and master.

Naturally, the list of requirements above is incomplete if he forgets or refuses to pay her compliments regularly, take her shopping, give her lots of attention and time for herself, and give her lots of space and place in which to roam. Above all, a good man does not forget her birthdays, anniversaries and appointments.

Speaking as man to man, how do you rate yourself as a percentage?

Ratings

- 90-100 Oh, you beautiful man! Whatever will I do without someone like you?
- 75-90 Reasonable but plenty of room for improvement
- 50-75 Bit of a rough diamond in need of extensive polishing
- 25-50 Really not a first choice but what can a poor girl do in these trying times?
- 0-25 Lout!

Advertising can mean trouble

(Henri Heyns)

Because of the large and ever-increasing number of dishonest people worldwide, and seemingly especially in this country, most law-abiding citizens are loath to provide personal particulars, notably I.D. information, banking particulars, home addresses and telephone numbers, etcetera to unknown people, especially over the telephone. As a result, a guy placing an advertisement in a newspaper will be pretty circumspect in what information he supplies to any would-be purchaser of his offering. After all, there could well be a confidence trickster on the other end of the communication line.

The following tale was told to me at a recent club Noggin. The member concerned wanted to sell his bike and after having unsuccessfully attempted to raise the interest of fellow bikers, decided to go the newspaper route.

The advertisement was to the point, containing only the essential information required to elicit an appropriate response and timed to run for four days. At first nothing happened. Then on the third day, the telephone rang and a male voice at the other end enquired whether the bike was still available and what the price was. The owner gave a brief description, stating the condition, mileage, colour, extras and what he wanted for it. Without any further ado the enquirer said he would take the bike as is and pay cash. He did not ask to see the bike first, test ride it, or make any other enquiries.

Elated at having made such a quick sale at his price, our friend asked as to the arrangements for the sale, where to meet, at what time, and so on. However, he became suspicious when the caller asked to conclude the sale on a street corner somewhere in Sunnyside at 21:00 the following night, to ask for Jakes who would be dressed in a blue overall and cap. and to be sure to have the registration papers with him.

Needless to say, our friend, fearing that some serious misdemeanour was possibly afoot, never kept his part of the bargain. Who would care to do business under such circumstances anyway? What serious buyer, in his right mind, would conclude a deal like that in

the middle of the night on a street corner in Sunnyside, ostensibly paying cash for a motorcycle unseen and untested? It may just be that the prospective buyer was sincere and that because of circumstances the way he chose to do business was the only way available to him. However, the converse may also be true in that the 'buyer' was in reality a criminal after an 'easy take' of a motorcycle without having to pay for it. The latter option seems far more probable considering the circumstances.

Be careful when vending something of value like a motorcycle. There are many rogue 'buyers' in the streets waiting to take advantage of an unsuspecting seller. Some ask for a trial ride and just disappear with the bike. Also, by asking for a guy's ID and the car or bike keys with which he came, is no guarantee that things are what they seem. If the ID is a forgery and the vehicle stolen you have absolutely no redress if your bike and the rider just disappear.

Did I hear anyone ask what this world of ours is coming to? Drop your guard when doing business and you'll soon find out!

*S `n P wishes all its
readers a Merry
Christmas and a Happy
and Successful New
Year.*

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

*S `n P wens al sy lesers
'n Geseënde Kersfees
en 'n Gelukkige en
Sukksesvolle Nuwejaar
toe.*

Ease up guys or bear the consequences.

(Henri Heyns)

Case One.

It was on the news recently that an unfortunate 38 year old Pretoria biker was caught in a speed trap doing 275 km/h on the N2 freeway south of Scottburgh in KZN. Seemingly he gave the fuzz a good run for their (his?) money as he ignored a signal to stop and when pursued, turned off onto side roads in an effort to shake off the determined officers on his tail. He was later herded back onto the highway where he evaded capture for quite awhile. After some time of playing cat and mouse, the transgressor was ultimately caught in a road block on the N2, specially set up to await his arrival.

An official from the Traffic Department announced that the speedster's bike had been impounded as the machine had no number plates, but that the bike would be returned to its owner if the correct plates were fitted. The culprit was charged with exceeding the speed limit (R30 000) and failing to stop when ordered to do so (R1 000).

The magistrate he was hauled before, obviously not a motorcycling enthusiast, wasn't impressed with the speedster's Kawasaki ZX 12's performance and handed down a sentence forcing him to part with this heap of cash or to face an unspecified time alternative as a guest of the State, a situation for even the dare-devil biker, too ghastly to contemplate. Another veiled threat held that the gentlemen from the AFU (Assets Forfeiture Unit) may be invited to the party to take away our biker's toy permanently to see if they could impress on him the importance of obeying the (speed) laws of the land.

It seems as if the errant biker made a down payment of R7 000 in cash with a solemn promise of more to follow in due course, in exchange for a liberty that may be hanging on a thin thread should he fail to honour his obligation within a specified time.

A spokesman is reported to have said that traffic authorities are tired of motorists and bikers who think that they can avoid detection

by removing, obscuring, damaging or falsifying their number plates and that tough measures such as impounding vehicles for such offences are on the cards. So much for our speed freak friend whom the press castigate as a 'road hog'.

Case Two.

In a special press release, police have appealed to bikers to 'stick to the recommended speed limits to enable the rider himself to deal with unexpected obstacles on the road.' This follows a fatal accident in which an unidentified BMW R1100 rider was killed when he collided with a broken-down security company-owned armoured vehicle in the middle of the road on the N1 near Weltevreden Park near Roodepoort. Once again, the number plate was nowhere to be found as seemingly it had been removed to avoid identification and prosecution for exceeding the speed limit and other illegal forms of road behaviour.

Here again a spokesman for the police admitted to the authorities having difficulties in curtailing the activities of bikers speeding on highways. He added that it was the high speed that prevented the biker from acting timeously and appropriately to avoid an accident. He was reported to having been seen weaving in and out of the thick freeway traffic like a madman, with utter disregard for other road users around him.

The two cases deserve further consideration:

1. Reducing road accidents or filling coffers?

During my recent bike tour to the Cape I noticed many sign boards with the well-known admonishment that speed kills, often followed up by speed traps along the way. Funny thing, permissible speed is often reduced to 100, 80, and even 60 km/h in open areas with often not even other traffic in sight. Every now and then, even in the remotest of spots, one would see traffic officials behind rocks and between trees with mounted cameras waiting for any unsuspecting biker/motorist to fall foul of the law by travelling a fraction too fast. And you can't argue the point either because the camera represents the sole evidence to be used in court if you protest too much.

However, the law has to be obeyed if unpleasant consequences are to be avoided, so the choice you have is obvious. This is even if you hate the idea of the money-making objectives by certain authorities in mounting dozens of speed traps in their areas of jurisdiction. You could of course defend the case against you or plead for mercy but in both cases winning the Lotto is much more probable.

2. Speed also thrills.

This aspect has been covered by me in a previous article, so I won't be dwelling on this intriguing aspect. I cannot think it possible that any biker has never exceeded the speed limit at some time or other. It's a natural reaction for most people to see what their machine is capable of, even if only for a short stretch, or comparing performance with some other bike. It's even more natural for people to be in a hurry to get to their destination quicker at some time or other, or to be bored sitting in a queue behind other vehicles and wanting to move forward in the line. This and other reasons all lead to an almost irrepressible urge to exceed the speed limit, which in the nature of things, occurs a million or more times every day with road users.

Please don't misunderstand. I have been caught 'speeding' on a few occasions in my lifetime, as most of us probably have. However, as has already been referred to above, some of these speed traps are more directed towards the filling of municipal coffers than attempting to enforce road safety. Also, I'm not advocating indiscriminate speeding in built-up areas and on urban and other roads carrying a large volume of traffic. The laws are there. Break them at your peril!

What is of great concern to me, and I have said it in other communications before, is that the road safety people with their Speed Kills slogan are trying to fight human nature, obviously a futile gesture. It is rightly said that speeding is fine for speed and race tracks where, under controlled conditions, every enthusiast/competitor can show his mettle to his heart's content. It is also true that the roads are there for everyone's use and that you are able to use them provided you do not infringe the other person's right to do so as well.

3. Faster machines

A member of our club, expert 'S' rider and an avid BMW fan, recently, just for kicks, bought a 1000 cc Japanese motorcycle, known for its superlative performance and magnificent handling at high speed. He has sold the bike since, claiming that is a potential killer in that you can get up to 275 km/h and beyond almost as quickly as saying Jack Robinson. He assesses power delivery to be awesome if not scary and says that in the hands of an inexperienced rider, the bike is a lethal weapon. How fast is 275 km/h precisely? To most of us this figure represents serious speed. A simple calculation shows that at such a speed one travels almost 4,6 kms every minute, which equates to more than 76 metres (roughly three-quarters of a rugby field) in a second. That is plenty fast and if things go wrong at that speed for whatever reason, they tend to go terribly wrong!

A newspaper reporter described the speedster in Case One above as a road hog because of risking his own life and that of so many others on the road. However, the analogy is unfair because although causing inconvenience and upset, he didn't kill or injure anyone in his quest for speed. At the same time of this occurrence a driver of a mini bus carrying school team of girl basketball players to a tournament, lost control of the vehicle after a tyre blow-out near Richmond in the Cape. The vehicle left the road and overturned, killing herself, two other teachers and six scholars. What a terrible tragedy and we all commiserate deeply with the bereaved.

What do we learn from this? What exactly happened to have caused this horrific accident will probably never be known. All right, there were four seriously injured survivors left to tell what happened but they are twelve year old kids with presumably no knowledge of driving. Also, the accident probably happened so quickly and they came out of it so shocked as to not to be able to remember exactly what happened.

It is to be seriously doubted that the driver of this mini bus was travelling at breakneck speed or doing anything that may be construed as being extremely unsafe. Could she have

anticipated a tyre blow-out? Was the mini bus forced off the road by another vehicle? Did she know enough about emergency procedures and have the quickness of thought and action to have prevented the vehicle from leaving the road and overturning? Who knows? The point is that she and her passengers were on the road travelling to her destination at (probably) a moderate speed. This in itself is being on the road and therefore dangerous, whichever way you look at it. It has often been said that if you want to exclude the risk altogether of being killed or injured on the roads, simply stay off them altogether. If this cannot be achieved for whatever reason, then the risk is always going to be there.

Driver training

That there is something radically wrong with our driver selection and training programmes in this country is born out by the spate of runaway truck accidents, some of them with horrific consequences, that have been taking place recently. These often-overloaded out-of-control vehicles usually cause carnage and immense destruction of goods and property, to say nothing of the hundreds of man-hours lost as a result of traffic hold-ups, disruption of work and delivery schedules, etc. In most cases brake failure is given as the cause for this mayhem. Seemingly the drivers of these behemoths are not trained to use their engines and gearboxes to assist in braking the thirty and more tons of deadweight. People with even only an inkling of mechanical matters would know that braking means the reduction of the kinetic energy of a vehicle in motion and its transfer into heat energy. So, by heavy and continuous braking, an enormous amount of heat is generated. This in turn causes the hydraulic brake fluid in the braking system to reach boiling point which drastically reduces the efficiency of the braking effect, hence the loss of control due to 'brake failure'.

To be sure, traffic authorities have attempted to call a halt to these accidents with the introduction of various safety measures. One is to close off roads or certain sections thereof to heavy vehicles as in the case of the prohibition on vehicles over 5 tons from coming off the Ben Schoeman Highway (N14) and going downhill

towards Eeufees Road near the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria. The junction at the bottom of the hill has been the scene of many fatal accidents following brake failures on heavy vehicles coming down the hill.

Another measure is the enforced stopping areas for heavy vehicles before descending a hill. Yet another is slowing down sand pits provided at road sides to allow vehicles to come to a safe standstill in the event of brake failure. Signboards are also erected compelling truck drivers to engage a lower gear when approaching a steep slope so that engine braking power can be used more effectively.

Another measure in force for slowing down heavy vehicles is employed on the hill, the name of which evades me at the moment, meandering all the way from Hilton down to Pieter Maritzburg in Natal. All trucks exceeding a certain weight are made to stop on top of the hill where brakes, load security and general condition of the vehicle may be inspected by traffic officials. Thereafter, the vehicle is allowed to proceed downhill within a maximum speed limit but may use the left hand lane only. This means that no overtaking whatsoever is allowed and that heavy vehicles must follow one another until the bottom of the hill is reached.

Although no statistics are available on the success or not of these measures, one can safely assume that they are instrumental in preventing many accidents that would have occurred had they not been introduced. However, heavy vehicle accidents continue to take place regularly all over the country.

For in case readers may ask, all the above has everything to do with motorcycling because with few exceptions, bikers all use public thoroughfares to get from one place to another and are therefore especially exposed to the risks of road use. My advice? Be constantly alert all the time, stay within speed limits, flow with the traffic, be courteous and anticipate events cropping up continuously around you.

Don't forget the first club social of the new year on Friday 6th January 2006.

Ensure that wheel nuts are tight.

(Henri Heyns in cooperation with Bruce Meyers and his technical staff)

Not so long ago a club member riding solo and alone, on a pleasure run somewhere, had an experience on tar that he's not likely to forget. Coming out of a turn at moderate speed he felt the sensation of the bike's rear end wandering a bit. Funny he thought but it's probably due to an unevenness in the road. Shortly thereafter he experienced the same sensation and now, reasonably alarmed, immediately thought of air loss from the rear wheel, which would explain the wandering effect. He immediately reduced speed and prepared to stop. This was not meant to be because at that moment the rear wheel came loose from its hub. Our friend lost control of the machine, came off, and was dumped unceremoniously on the side of the road whilst the steed made ugly contact with terra firma and came to rest, much the worse for tear rather than wear, farther down the road.

Fortunately our friend came away from this ordeal reasonably intact, thanks to the protective clothing he was wearing. His bike sustained some damage but nothing Bruce and his boys couldn't fix after having obtained an affirmative nod from the insurance company. So, in a few weeks after the mishap, the subject of this discussion was on his way again, riding merrily along in an appropriate BMW fashion.

So, what went wrong that could have caused the bike's rear wheel to part company with its hub? It would appear that our friend, being something of a cleanliness fanatic, likes to virtually strip his bike every few weeks or so, and meticulously clean and polish every nut and bolt on his bike that he can lay hands on. It appears that he was also handy with a paint brush because he had removed the rear wheel during the last clean-up session and carefully painted the wheel hub to maintain the pristine condition that his machine was in.

This action is a no-no in just about every bike service manual. The reason? Ostensibly the layer of paint, between the inside of the wheel rim and the hub, even if only a

few microns thick, prevents the wheel from attaching properly, no matter how tight the wheel nuts are made. Then, gradually the paint wears away with the result that the wheel nuts are under-tensioned and can then, in time, work loose with the potential for catastrophe.

Even so, how many do-it-yourself bikers possess a torque wrench? What is it, some of you may well ask. Torque is a turning force, usually measured in Newton meters (Nm), i.e. the force used times the length of the lever used to apply it. A torque wrench measures the amount of twisting force that is applied to a nut or bolt by means of a dial or calibrated arm. It is an adjustable wrench enabling one to tighten nuts on a bike/vehicle to the exact specification recommended by the manufacturer. Torque wrenches are used when the torque has been specified for the job or when it is important that all fasteners be fully and uniformly tightened, such as engine bearing caps, cylinder head nuts, etc. If a torque value has been specified for a particular application, it is unsafe not to measure that tension with a torque wrench.

I had a flat rear wheel on my R1150R the other day whilst visiting family in Johannesburg. The wheel spanner arrangement supplied in the bike's tool kit is not up to the task of loosening the four nuts and I had to borrow a 'four-way' wrench. (Even that took some doing to get the nuts loose.) The wheel was brought back to Bruce's Place for the puncture to be repaired and I returned to Johannesburg for refitting the wheel. I tightened the bolts with reasonable force just to get back to Pretoria. Upon my arrival back home I called on Bavarian's experts to torque the bolts and was surprised to see how much more they could be pulled up. The figure for the R1150 R is 105 Nm. Other models require different torque settings, so be sure to ascertain from the agents what applies to your bike.

What is the moral to the story? Whatever you do, never, never paint, oil or grease the surfaces that must be bolted together. Ensure that wheel nuts are tightened with a torque wrench set to the correct tension. Also never oil the threads on a wheel stud, – bolt or – nut. To ignore this piece of advice is to do so at your peril!

Official Club Calendar for 2005 + Jan. 2006

Listed below are all the official events organised by or attended by the club. Overnight trips have a star. All runs and events are subject to confirmation at the prior club social meeting. This is a work-in-progress and may be altered at any time. No responsibility will be accepted for changes to the programme.

IMPORTANT: Non-club members are welcome to attend club events as guests. Non-members, however, are required to sign an indemnity form before participating. The form can be downloaded from the Home Page.

The club has an official policy regarding the use and financial compensation of support vehicles on official overnight club trips. Details appear on the Home Page.

MONTH	DATE	ROUTE / DESTINATION	Kms	ORGANISERS
Sept.	3-4*	<i>Anniversary Weekend - Ellisras</i>	600	<i>DeonGericke/ Etienne vd Stockt</i>
	21-26*	<i>Great African GS Challenge</i>	?	<i>Pieter de Koker (Homepage)</i>
Oct.	9	<i>Club Training Day - Zwartkops (Auto Alpina)</i>	350	<i>Renier Jordaan</i>
	28-30*	<i>Rhino Rally</i>	900	<i>Brian Cannoo (Homepage)</i>
Nov.	6	<i>Lunch Run - Dullstroom</i>	550	<i>Mike Hennessy/Rupert Richter</i>
	13	<i>Cansa Cycle Race Marshalling</i>		<i>Mike Hennessy</i>
Dec.	2-4*	<i>Golden Gate</i>	?	<i>Deon Gericke</i>
	16-18*	<i>Sabie</i>	?	<i>Renier Jordaan/Pieter de Koker</i>
Jan.	8	<i>Sunday Run - TBA</i>		
	21-22*	<i>Badplaas</i>	?	<i>Renier Jordaan</i>

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