

SPOKE & PISTON



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From The Chair...



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Dear Members,

Mike Hennessy is presently overseas so I am privileged to share some of the great things happening in the club. This year is our 10th anniversary and we would not have been able to celebrate this milestone without a very active and enthusiastic membership base. Our membership, including family and country members, is now approaching 200 people and to assist us in planning our rides we will be conducting a new survey in the near future to assess whether we are still on the right track.

Special mention must also be made of the dedicated people who willingly give up some of their free time to manage the affairs of the club and Brian Cannoo must be complimented for developing and keeping our website up to date. Please visit there regularly!

Our 10th anniversary is on 8th July, and to celebrate this we are planning a great one-night breakaway to Machauka Lodge in Ellisras over the weekend of 3 September. Last year's visit to Ellisras was a sell-out.

Our growing membership has put our limited club space under a bit of pressure and, as you will have noticed, Bruce Meyers has allowed us to use the parking area of the workshop to accommodate everyone. The good news is that work on the new showroom is progressing well and we anticipate being able to "move in" by the August social.

We have sadly lost two club members to motorcycle accidents in the last year. Dave Preston was the first and it was with great sadness that we received news of Charles Haumann's motorcycle accident and his tragic death. Always a popular figure, Charles' great sense of humour and humanity will be sadly missed by all of us who had the privilege of knowing him.

Our members are not just statistics but are part of a great family who enjoy the same passion for riding a BMW motorcycle. I would encourage everyone to participate in formalised training sessions because they provide us with the skills to have a long, safe and pleasurable riding career. Recently one of the dealerships took the initiative to sponsor a training day at Swartkops. We only received news of it at a late stage but for those of us who attended, it was great fun. The training sessions run by the BMW Rider Academy are also well worth attending.

Those regular visitors to our website Forum would have seen the reference to a website discovered by Pieter de Koker, but I would like to draw your attention to it as well. The www.flamesonmytank.co.za site gives some great tips on various aspects of motorcycle riding.

For those people who are going on Natal Meander have a great trip.

Renier Jordaan,
Acting Chairman.

Toll Road Farce

(From a report appearing in Two Wheels magazine, April May 05 edition)

AMID, the Association of Motorcycle Importers and Distributors, has been in discussion with representatives of the SA National Road Agency Limited (SANRA) since early 2004 with the purpose of negotiating a fair charge at toll road plazas for motorcyclists. A communication recently received from SANRA poured cold water on bikers hopes for even a small concession from this quarter. This organisation announced that the request for a special toll class or complete toll exemption for motorcycles could not be entertained on the basis of the following:

- Where wear and tear to the road surface is considered, the difference in load per wheel of a small car compared to that of a motorcycle is insignificant;
- benefits in terms of time saving, safety and convenience offered to bikers are as much if not more than that experienced by light motor vehicles;
- toll exemption to any specific type of road user would be unfair and inequitable;
- there is very little motorcycle traffic on toll roads and its level would not warrant expenditure on system/plaza modifications;
- motorcycles use the same if not more road space than that of a small/light vehicle, due to their ability to weave and change lanes and thereby placing the same demands on road traffic capacity; and
- motorcycles take up more time to process in toll lanes and hence place greater demands on plaza capacity.

The Association poses the question if this last reason is not a direct contradiction of the statement mentioned in the second argument above wherein convenience and time saving for the biker is claimed.

AMID states unequivocally that the above reasons for denying motorcyclists the right to a more equitable pricing structure for using toll roads are rejected outright.

Editor's comment: SANRA's contention that few motorcycles use the toll roads hits the nail on the head. It is probably the best way to voice bikers' objection to the tariff structure. If the price of a product is too high, just refuse to buy!

What do you bikers think? Let's hear from you please.

A WOMAN ALONE

(Donna Clausen)

During the 1980's to see a woman on a motorbike was almost unheard of and needless to say the names allocated to her are not printable. At the time I was riding a Kawasaki LTD 1000, my pride and joy. What made it more desirable, was that I had had a Goldwing fairing fitted which finished off those black brooding looks. Panniers completed the picture, even if they were made of cardboard-type material covered with black heavy duty PVC. (I could not get BMW panniers to fit at the time). The idea to tour had grown gradually within me and finally the blurred concept emerged into a kaleidoscope of planning, research and more planning.

So it was that at the Christmas lunch table in 1984 I imparted my plans to those gathered. All hell broke loose! 'Are you insane? A woman alone?' was the first reaction. 'You have done some crazy things, but this is the worst I've ever heard!' was another. 'Is it safe, my girlie?' That from my mother. My father merely glowered with pale blue eyes. Needless to say Christmas lunch did not go as planned. The subject was not broached again that day.

Some time later my father called and invited me – more a command if you knew my father – to come and see him. I knew that it was going to be a discussion regarding my intended tour and so set out ready for battle. When I arrived at the house, he was waiting, two packages on the table before him. No small talk. He got to the point. 'I suppose you are still going ahead with your plans?' he asked. I nodded. Mouth dry. He pushed the two boxes towards me. The first contained a .38 Smith and Wesson. Black metal gleamed with a silk finish. The second, a Cobra CB. In those days these two-way radios were quite the rage in South Africa. Particularly with farmers who were becoming the targets of farm attacks more often. From the floor next to him he retrieved an aerial the length of a sjambok. That is how my father gave me his blessing. My mother remained mute and I ignored anything my family may have thought.

A friend fitted the CB on a bracket above the tail light and arranged for me to be taught how to use it – all those call signs of ten-four, Big Buddy, etcetera. I had to get a licence to use it, the same with the revolver.

Being one of those organisational freaks I drew up maps indicating mileage for fuel stops, lists of places to sleep over, roads to avoid and those to take. I had a two-man tent, a pot, a billy-can, sleeping bag and eating utensils. Lookwell was unheard of then, so my warm jacket was a down-filled import that billowed like the sails on a yacht and my rain pants leaked so badly that when I got out of the saddle the water that had pooled under my butt, drained down my legs and into my boots. That is how I started out.

I quit my job, registered with Kelly Girl so that I could have some work to keep the touring finances going and pay for my flat. I planned to tour for three weeks at a time, go back to Johannesburg, work and then take off again. I toured from Messina (in those days) in the north to Josini in the east, Cape Town in the south and Port Nolloth in the west, and whatever was in between. I meandered along the tar, cursed and battled my way on gravel, slept in caravan parks/camping sites and once back in Johannesburg, relentlessly planned and schemed to reach the next horizon. I was free!

The first six months were hell. I was scared, alone and a very small speck in the vastness of this incredibly beautiful country. My company on those trips were head-conversations, always a book to read at night and people that I met at the caravan parks/camping facilities. Some I would have been proud to take home to meet the folks, others were probably destined for prison. However, such was my joy that I saw them only as free spirits sharing the same goal as I ... to travel South Africa, marvel at the green of the Natal midlands, the lonely khaki of the Karoo and the thundering waterfalls that dotted the Eastern Transvaal, the Drakensberg range and Northern Cape.

Those months taught me how to pack properly, how to strap on the pot and billy-can so that I did not approach the outskirts of a town sounding like a big brass band and, most importantly, to live with myself. A loner by nature, it was one thing to be alone living in Hillbrow but an entirely different experience being out there with nothing between you and God, but vast space. The one thing I learned very quickly, was never to be too far away from that motorbike. It was my security blanket and my vehicle of freedom all in one. At one refuelling point in Harrismith I had gone to the bathroom and upon my return I found my rain suit had been stolen. I had tied it on the back after passing through a storm at Heidelberg and quite honestly, forgotten to put it back in the pannier. I did not quite realise at that moment just how important that thin PVC was to me. Of course, I was furious, but it was a Sunday and I would just have to continue without it for the time being.

Between Swinburne and Ladysmith I drove into another storm. It was a doozy! In Ladysmith I changed into dry clothing and waited. The rain let up eventually and I set off again. About an hour north of Estcourt, the first drops fell once more. I was so cold, that eventually the bike was meandering left to right across the south-bound lane, I could hardly control it. In Estcourt I literally fell into the police station, where I requested sanctuary as my budget did not allow for the luxury of a hotel. (It was possible back then to sleep in the cells in desperate situations.) The sergeant on duty, a middle-aged career policeman, informed me that the cells were full, but I think that it was more pity than anything else. He phoned a local hotel, I

think it was called the Plough Inn or something similar, and arranged for a room. I objected, telling him I did not have that type of money but he assured me that I was not to worry. 'It was on the South African Police.' When I arrived in that room it was like walking into the King Edward Hotel on the Marine Parade in Durban – pure luxury. The manager had put a two-bar heater on and arranged for sandwiches as dinner had long passed. I bathed and passed out. The next morning, my jeans that had been hanging over the towel rail, had dried and were so hard that I bet I could have stood them up on the floor!

I passed through two-house villages that were not even on the map, ate next to the road, crossed the Karoo with my helmet around my wrist to experience the total freedom of the wind in my hair, swam in the pools at the base of waterfalls and lived without a care in the world. Well ... until my money ran short and I had to get back to Johannesburg to work and get more. Those periods of work were akin to being on a prison gang. I chafed at the confinement of four walls, the plodding hours and having to be in the city.

For two years I toured South Africa, a woman alone. Now, older and wiser I look back and remember my mother's words: 'Is it safe, my girlie?' What does 'safe' really mean? To me it is relative to the times we live in. Today, doing the same trip would be considered totally unsafe and an act bordering on the insane. I often ask myself the question when I take my GS out and ride the gravel roads on my own 'is this safe?' I guess to be honest it is not. However, if we should be prevented from doing the things we love each time because we consider the situation and surroundings unsafe, where would we be? Stuck in an armchair, watching TV and blossoming on a diet of crisps, biltong and beer, because THAT is safe!

Then we would only be able to dream of trips across open veld, between low-slung thorn trees and with the pale-dust trail of kicked-up gravel hanging in the air behind us. We would stick to the tried and trusted and the pioneering spirit of the true adventurers would die a lonely and dreamless death.

Donna is no ordinary lady motorcyclist. She completed Jan du Toit's advanced off-road course (one of the toughest in the country) with flying colours and has many thousands of kms of serious off-road riding to her credit. Having ridden a variety of bikes, Donna prefers her GS which, she says, gives her the freedom to roam.



What Price Enthusiasm?

(Henri Heyns)

At the last club social two die-hard GS bikers were given recognition for what must surely be one of the best examples of astute and dedicated riding. *Billy Thomas* from Durban and *Billy Lance* from Kempton Park each received the Extreme Rider (Gold – Riders) Award for having visited the four furthestmost points of South Africa in the time span of ten days.

This of course, has been done by other riders before, but what makes their effort astounding is that at the same time they visited Swaziland, Botswana, Namibia and Lesotho, a feat of ultimate riding which is not going to be easily equalled, let alone bettered. These hard-riding bikers set out on 18 February, the hottest time of the year in the northern areas, and returned ten days later, having covered over 7500 kms, with some 750 kms on dirt.

Speaking to these guys, they admitted to their love for GS biking, and according to them, the rougher the better. Of course, riding like this, in the heat and sometimes on bad roads, is no picnic, with the result that they rode for nine days with one full day's rest in between.

Asked whether they would recommend this sort of adventure to all bikers they replied that this is certainly not child's play and that dedication, discipline, good machinery and equipment, a good relationship with your buddy, but especially the will to succeed, are the necessary ingredients in this mix.

What advice do they have for would-be award winners? Apart from the above, an important don't is not to camp. (They did carry a small tent as a backup though.) Extreme riders need a good night's rest as they are tired from sitting glued to the saddle all day. When calling it a day you don't still want to be bothered with pitching a tent and getting all the paraphernalia ready before popping into bed. Similarly, next morning you need to be away. There isn't time for breaking down the sleeping quarters, packing and so on.

Another tip is for riders to carry spare water. They each carried a can on their back with a sucking mechanism so that they could take water in on the go.

Breaking new ground as it were, is strenuous. One has to plan the route, select the road, warn of deteriorating road conditions, decide where to tank up, where to rest and so on. This is why each person took over leadership on alternative days, giving the 'follower' a chance to do just that.

The two Bills had no back-up, relying instead on the good condition of their bikes, and on their enthusiasm and ability to get to their destination, whatever the obstacles.

To further show what an enthusiastic biker is capable of, *Billy Thomas* came up from Durban especially to collect his award. If that does not display a love of biking, what does? Well done you guys. You have set a riding standard that would be hard to follow. Any takers?



Chairman Mike Hennessy (left) with Extreme Rider (Gold) award winners Billy Thomas and Billy Lance.

Product News

The GG Quad 1200

(Henri Heyns)

All right, this is not about motorcycles of the two-wheeled variety but a quadruple machine powered by a BMW Boxer engine. I received this spy pic over the Internet and immediately conceived of a first from BMW Motorrad themselves. My excitement was short lived as asking around revealed that this Quad is **not** from BMW. As a matter of fact, it isn't even built in Germany, but in Switzerland!

This is what the manufacturer *Grüter & Gut Motorradtechnik GmbH* have to say about their product: "Built with Swiss precision and from exclusively top quality parts, the GG Quad allows you to take along a passenger even on long trips. The bodywork with its dominating and feisty front section will have heads turning as you drive by,

as will the extensive technical features so readily apparent on this model. An interesting range of accessories is available for any finishing touches you might like to make on this unique vehicle."

This vehicle will have a six gear transmission with a maximum speed of 160 km/h. Fuel will be carried in a tank holding 20 litres and its empty weight is 375 kg. Instead of the customary chain, the rear wheels are driven by a differential.

And now for the crunch line before anybody gets his/her blood pressure up over this nifty piece of machinery. As far as can be established, there are no dealers for this product in SA. This means that the GG Quad will have to be imported fully built up. An estimate by a guy in the business puts a figure of some R250 000 on such a transaction.

Come on you flush-with-cash people. Raise your esteem among the less fortunate countrymen by being the first to import this little toy. (I can think of a couple of well-heeled club members who could just be doing this thing.)

Interested? Then make contact with Grüter & Gut as follows:

Tel: +41 41 448 33 63; Fax: +41 41 448 33 73;
E-mail: info@gg-technik.ch

For more information, the Internet Web Page is on www.gg-technik.ch



What an attractive little toy this is, with the oil-air head motor showing that it is unmistakably of BMW origin. Who would be the first guy in S.A to import this interesting piece of Swiss-engineered machinery and thereby becoming the talk of the town?

Beterskap Dirk!

Dr. Dirk Alberts, jarelange lid van hierdie klub, het onlangs 'n slegte ervaring gehad. Sy so-te-sê splinternuwe 1200 GS met 5000 km op die klok is totaal afgeskryf deur 'n motoris wat van agter in hom vasgery het. Hy het by 'n robot stilgestaan en wag dat die lig moet oorslaan en het nie eers onraad vermoed totdat die slag hom getref het nie. Dinge gebeur natuurlik so vinnig dat mens nie tyd het om te dink nie. Hy sê een oomblik was hy op sy fiets en die volgende oomblik was hy op die grond. Dirk was gelukkig alleen op die fiets. Hy het sy rug, een been en 'n duim beseer, maar het darem genoegsaam herstel om Meimaand se geselligheid by die klub te kon bywoon, beenstut en al. Dirk het half-hartseer gestaan by die verwronge stuk motorfiets wat eers sy groot liefde was en nou onseremonieel tussen al die ander wrakstukke in Bruce se skuur tot rus gekom het. Dit is toe dat ek bietjie met hom gaan gesels het.

Ek het Dirk gevra wat sy eerste reaksie as dokter was toe hy agtergekom het dat hy raakgery is. Hy het gesê die skok eers, en dan die daaropvolgende pyn is so groot dat mens eintlik nie behoorlik kan dink nie. Sy eerste gewaarwording was dat hy op die grond gelê en seer het, maar nie seker was hoe hy daar gekom het nie. Hy het onmiddellik daarna aan sy fiets gedink en wou opstaan om te kyk waar dié is, maar kon nie beweeg nie. Dan eers volg die gewaarwording dat jy 'n slagoffer in 'n motorongeluk is en dringend hulp benodig.

'n Motoris wat die ongeluk sien gebeur het, ook toevallig 'n paramedikus, het hom bygestaan. Dirk het vir die weldoener gefluister dat hyself 'n dokter is, maar die man het net gesê dat Dirk stil moet lê en nie bekommer nie. Die man het geweet wat hy doen en Dirk moes toe maar die toegepaste noodhulprosedure met dankbaarheid aanvaar. Gelukkig kon hy redelik vinnig na 'n hospitaal afgevoer word waar hy die nodige behandeling kon ontvang.

S'n P sê jammer Dirk dat hierdie ding jou oorgekom het. Ons is bly dat jy nie baie ernstig beseer is nie en wens jou 'n spoedige en volle herstel toe. Hopelik in die nabye toekoms sien ons jou weer op jou slinternuwe tweewielperd. Dis mos die lewe, nie waar nie?

Getting to know your committee (2)

(Henri Heyns)



Renier Jordaan is the Vice Chairman of the club committee for this year. This position has become necessary as result of the growing size of the committee due to increased activities. The latter also necessitated the establishment of sub-committees looking after the various portfolios like on- and off-road riding, general administration, membership and so on. He is also responsible for the road events of the club, a portfolio that will probably eat into most of his spare time.

Renier, contrary to what his name may intimate, was born in Gatoma in the old Southern Rhodesia fifty years ago. His accent gives away the fact that he is actually English speaking, but Afrikaans comes just as easily to him.

Our Vice Chairman holds a BSc. Hons. degree in Chemistry from the University of Natal, lives in Centurion and is employed by Sasol.

Together with his better half Malinda, who is a programme manager at Armscor and a keen pillion rider, they enjoy motorcycling immensely. According to these two, the enormous camaraderie among co-riders features highly in club attributes. He prefers BMW motorcycles because they are comfortable, are mostly equipped with shaft drive, made to last and usually yield a better return at trade-in time. Obviously loyal to the marque, Renier is the proud owner of a K1200 RS.

Renier has two children, Ian (29) and Nadia (19). Nadia is a student at Tukkies where she is busy with her B.Com.(Acc.) degree. Malinda also has two children Melindi (22) and Leanne (19).

Asked what he thought the greatest dangers to be in motorcycling, Renier replied that bikers are to blame most of the time. They must ensure that they are visible to motorists by wearing bright clothing and must also be attentive in observing what other road users are doing.

S`n P welcomes Renier and Malinda to the fold and wishes them a happy stay. Renier`s professional and administrative skills will provide a much-needed injection into the smooth running of club affairs, for which we are extremely grateful.

Towing along

(Henri Heyns)

Whilst preparing my bike for the Cape trip that I undertook in February, my neighbour two doors down popped in to see what I was doing. As we chatted, I kept busy by arranging and packing the emergency equipment I might need, especially as I was travelling alone. He watched as I carefully rolled up a tow rope, gently inserting it in the small space between the frame and the left side-cover just under the saddle.

“What's that for?” he enquired. When I told him he asked incredulously where I was going to attach the rope on my bike if I needed a tow. I explained the procedure and my friend was even more amazed. I must admit that I haven't tried it before, but got the tip from a guy at one of our monthly Noggins. Will it work? Let me put the question to the readers. Perhaps a fundi among them could vouch for its practicability so that we can all learn from such an oracle of wisdom.

But first three most important principles for towing properly and safely by rope. First is to tie the rope as low down as possible for added stability. This is almost impossible to achieve as modern motorcycles, with all the paraphernalia built into and around them, leave no space for attaching a tow rope. This is especially true when considering bikes with bulky fairinged front ends. Second is that the rope must be just long enough for manoeuvring but not so long that an overtaking vehicle might mistake the gap as an open area to pull into. Third is that there must be no permanent tie between the tow vehicle and the bike being towed. This is very important as an emergency release for the towed bike must be provided for. What if the towed biker has a spill or loses control for whatever reason and comes off with the bike tied to the towing vehicle in motion?

Here is the suggested solution to this conundrum. Fix the rope to the towing bike's left footrest and to the right footrest of the bike being towed. This will mean that the towing bike will run slightly to the right of the towed bike. Make one loop around the towed bike's footrest with the rope but do not tie a knot. The weight of the rider's foot on the rest will be sufficient to keep the rope in place but in an emergency he needs only to relax his foot to get the rope to slip free, thereby keeping him in control.

Remember though that the other emergency measures must remain in place at all times. These are to take off and slow down gradually, keeping the speed down to not more than forty kms/h on the open road, ensuring that the emergency flicker lights are on, on both bikes, staying on the extreme left of the road as far as possible, being constantly alert, and so on.

There you have it! Come on you biking boffins. Knock a hole into this technique and come up with something better if you dare. If you think this method to be workable, try it out and let us know your findings. To those of you who think that BMWs don't break down on the road, thank you for your confidence in the quality and endurance of this supreme product, but remember that a day is a day...!

Thought for the day on knowledge

He who knows not and knows that
he knows not is ignorant – teach
him

He who knows not and knows not
that he knows not is a fool – shun
him

He who knows and knows not that
he knows is asleep – wake him

He who knows and knows that he
knows is a wise man – follow him

† Totsiens Charles †

(Henri Heyns)

Dit is met leedwese dat ons moet aankondig dat klublid en goeie vriend Henry Charles Haumann op Sondag 22 Mei sy lewe tragies in 'n motorfietsongeluk verloor het. Hy was 53 jaar oud.

Die begrafnis is gelei deur Ds. Willem Brits uit die N.G. Kerk te Bosmanstraat in Pretoria op Vrydag 27 Mei. Sowat 130 familielede, kollegas en vriende het die verrigtinge bygewoon. Onder die belangstellendes was mederyers in 'n motorfietsstoet van 25 BMWs wat ook die laaste eer aan Charles, soos hy algemeen bekend was, betoon het.

Die klub se Ondervoorsitter, Renier Jordaan, het ook 'n boodskap van simpatie tot die naasbestaendes gerig. Hy het onder andere vertel van die vriendelike atmosfeer wat altyd geheers het waar Charles teenwoordig was en hoe dat almal wat hom geken het, sy aangename geaardheid en positiewe uitkyk op die lewe vir baie lank sal onthou.

Charles laat 'n dogter Lisl en seun Kris agter en ons innige meegevoel met hul groot verlies en beste wense vir wat ook al mag voorlê, gaan met hulle.

Namens die BMW Motorfietsklub Pretoria, bring S 'n P hulde aan 'n ontslape sielsgenoot vir wie die lewe uitdagend was en wat volgens hom manmoedig, dog in 'n gees van optimisme, onderneem moes word. Hy was 'n mensmens en het voluit gelewe. Wat hy ook al aangepak het, is met 'n passie gedoen. So ook was sy motorfiets 'n stokperdjie en het hy on die



Vriend en kennis Henry Charles Haumann in rygewaad soos klublede hom dikwels gesien het. Hierdie foto is geneem tydens 'n BMW 'S' Beker wedren by die Swartkops renbaan naby Pretoria. Hy was 'n bo-gemiddelde en geesdriftige ryer en fietsry was sy lewe. Totsiens goeie vriend. Ons sal jou baie mis.

To filter or not to filter... that is the question

(Henri Heyns with an apology to William Shakespeare's Hamlet)

If there's a road that most users detest it's the freeway to and from Johannesburg. It doesn't matter what time of the day or night you're on it, traffic congestion is sure to occur, unless you're a night owl and use it during the very early hours of the morning. This is why I don't visit my eighty year-old sister who lives in retirement in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg, more often. When I occasionally do, and take her out to lunch, I have to leave Darrenwood before three o'clock to avoid a bumper-to-bumper confrontation with traffic all the way back home. As a motorcyclist, I naturally have to be extra cautious not to become the victim of some other road user's driving error.

Oh yes, I know about filtering through the traffic to make headway and often have to resort to this technique to get where I want to be before day is done. I often find fellow bikers flashing past in between rows of cars, sometimes stationary and sometimes crawling along at snail's pace. Yes, I do filter as well, but also at snail's pace because of my reluctance to become sandwiched in between two vehicles if a driver suddenly breaks out of his lane to occupy another without ensuring that it's safe to do so.

I was talking to a fellow biker at Bruce's place the other day and the subject of filtering came up. Using the freeway quite often, he agrees that this technique is the only way to go if a biker wishes to get to his destination in anything like normal time. But he asked, is it legal to do so? For the first time I started pondering the legality of this useful, yet risky manoeuvre. I've started to make a few enquiries from people I know but from the answers I received, must admit to being more confused now than what I was at the outset. I also tried to lay my hands on recent road traffic legislation, but must again report that this chore is more onerous than what one would normally expect. Is the question of filtering enacted in an Act of parliament, is it contained in a provincial ordinance (one then for each province) or delegated downwards into the hands of several hundred city councils and municipalities to enact their own piece of legislation as they see fit in the form of municipal bye-laws?

As a last gasp I asked a Pretoria Metro traffic officer for advice. These guys at least have to know what

is legal on the road and what not, without having to be able to quote the section and page numbers of the applicable legislation. This affable gentleman told me that existing road rules forbid more than one vehicle travelling alongside each other in a single lane. This in effect means that no motorcycle is allowed to pass a motorcar travelling in the same lane. But, the officer explained, because of the congestion on our roads nowadays and in order to allow traffic to flow, motorcycles are allowed to stop between rows of cars at robots and stop streets to allow them to pull away quickly when the traffic starts moving again.

The above has led to a general acquiescence by traffic officers of allowing motorcycles to filter, even on the open road, always with the proviso of course, that it is safe to do so. As the officer put it, *turning a blind eye* is what happens when such a manoeuvre occurs.

This explanation, even though well meant, sent cold shivers down my spine. What happens if one traffic officer doesn't want to turn a 'blind eye' and slaps a ticket on a hapless biker for doing what he thought to be all right? Worse even, what happens in the event of a serious accident occurring because of filtering and the rider being held responsible for thousands of rands in injuries and damage because it is illegal to filter anyway? Where does the 'blind eye' argument come in now to support the guilty party?

Despite my best efforts, I'm still in a quandary as to the legality of filtering through traffic and will not rest until this vexing question has been answered satisfactorily. If anyone reading this is in a position to throw light onto this dilemma, please let us hear from him/her. Should the person wish to remain so, anonymity is guaranteed!

Howler!



An exquisitely dressed gentleman from the upper echelons of society stopped at a pub for a drink after work one day. A blonde

hooker, attractive but not very intelligent, caught his eye and as his wife was out of town for a spell, decided on a bit of illicit fun for the evening. He gave the girl the glad eye, paid for his drink and she followed him out as he walked down the street to his car. Halfway down the road was a furrier's and they stopped to look.

“If I come with you tonight, will you buy me that fur coat?” she asked.

The man looked at the expensive article in the window, turned to his companion and replied in impeccable English:

“Madam, I’m astounded at your imprudent and extravagant suggestion. Who on earth do you think I am – Chancellor of the Exchequer? How, in the wildest flight of your somewhat restricted imagination, do you think I could possibly succumb to your charms to the extent that I would surrender everything I hold dear for a few moments of earthly pleasure? As it is, my delicate financial position precludes me from entertaining such outrageous expenditure. I must admit to the fact that I find your suggestion preposterous and state unequivocally that such a proposal can only meet with the utter condemnation I’m capable of conveying to you.”

The blonde, taken aback by such an outburst of verbal diarrhoea said: “I don't get it!”, to which the gentleman replied: “That's what I said!”

’n Brief aan Beeld oor Motorfietstolgeld.

Meneer,

Ek verwys na J.A.D. Prinsloo van Lynnwoodrif se brief ‘Padmonsters word op ’n yslike skaal gesubsidieer’ in u koerant van 19 April 2005.

Die korrespondent verwys daarin na die onregverdige verdeling van tolgeld tussen sy motor van sowat een ton gewig, teenoor die dertig ton ‘monster’ vragwaens wat ons paaie so verrinneweer. Die tolgeld van eersgenoemde by ’n sekere punt beloop R31 teenoor R112 van laasgenoemde, dus ’n verhouding van 3,6:1. Hy vergelyk dan die gewig van die twee voertuie en kom dan by ’n verhouding van 30:1 uit. Op die oog af is hierdie toedrag van sake skreiend en tekenend van ’n administrasie wat daarop uit is om soveel geld moontlik die padgebruiker, sonder aansiens des persoons, uit die sak te jaag.

Sou die heer ’n motorfietsryer wees, sou sy onvergenoegdheid nog verder die hoogte inskiet want hier sou die verhouding ’n verre gaande 150:1 wees! (My motorfiets weeg sowat 0,2 ton.)

Laat my asseblief toe om dit te stel dat ek op my motorfiets dieselfde tolgeld moet betaal as ’n motor **plus** ’n sleepwa of klein woonwa. Hoe klink dit vir onregverdigheid?

Die verskillende motorfietsklubs (daar is heelwat van hulle), die Vereniging van Motorfiets-invoerders, redakteurs van die verskillende motorfietstydskrifte/-publikasies en ander belanghebbendes het al vertoë tot die owerheid gerig vir ’n realistiese benadering tot die hef van tolgeld vir tweewielvoertuie, maar pure verniet! Ons redenasie dat ’n motorfiets van al die soorte voertuie seker die minste slytasie op paaie veroorsaak en dus óf gratis óf teen verminderde koste op tol paaie toegelaat behoort te word, word telkemale in die wind geslaan.

Desondanks die swak beeld van motorfietse en hul ryers wat by die breë publiek bestaan, is ons oor die algemeen, met sekere uitsonderings natuurlik, goed-gemanierde, wetsgehoorsame en bedagsame landsburgers wat daarvan hou om op twee gemeganiseerde wiele oor die weg te kom. Dit is waarom die protesoptogte teen die hoë tolgeld van ’n paar jaar gelede, waar tolhekke geblokkeer is en deelnemende motorfietsryers swak gedrag openbaar en ongerief aan ander padgebruikers veroorsaak het, sondermeer ten sterkste deur die meerderheid afgekeur is.

Let asseblief daarop dat ons nie kwyt skelding van tolgeld eis nie, maar net vra dat redelikheid moet seëvier in die vasstelling van tariewe. Totdat die owerheid ’n meer realistiese benadering tot hierdie belangrike kwessie openbaar, sal ons voortgaan om die enigste wettige manier te gebruik om protes teen hoë tolgeld aan te teken – weerhou jou daarvan om tol paaie te gebruik!

Henri Heyns.

Redakteurskommentaar.

Hierdie brief, in gewysigde vorm, is die volgende dag geplaas. Tot dusver is daar nog nie kommentaar van enige oord ontvang nie.

OFFICIAL CLUB CALENDAR FOR 2005

(Last update 05-05-18)

Listed below are all 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
June	5 Sun	Breakfast Run - Warmbaths	320	Renier Jordaan/Adriaan Scheepers
	16-19	*Natal Meander (Route Plan)	1900	Dave Swart/Dorothy Prinsloo
July	3	Breakfast Run - Cullinan	150	Richard Hussey/Pieter de Koker
	9-11	*Ivory / Pontdrif Trip	1400	Johann Strauss/André Henrico
August	6-9	*Kosi Bay	1550	Renier Jordaan/Pieter de Koker
	7 Sun	Cars in the Park	?	TBA
September	3-4	*Anniversary Weekend - Ellisras	600	Deon Gericke/Etienne vd Stockt
	19-23	*Lesotho Circumnavigation	2000	Brian Cannoo/Pieter de Koker
	21-26	*Great African GS Challenge	?	Pieter de Koker (See Home Page)
October	9	Breakfast Run - Loskop Dam	350	Renier Jordaan
	28-30	*Rhino Rally	900	Brian Cannoo (See Home Page)
November	6	Lunch Run - Dullstroom	550	Mike Hennessy/Rupert Richter
December	2-4	*Golden Gate	?	Deon Gericke
	16-18	*Sabie	?	Renier Jordaan/Pieter de Koker

Spoke`n Piston also appears on our website at www.bmwclubs.co.za Visit us there and become acquainted with the comings and goings of our club, together with newsy bits, information on new products, what is happening on the motorcycling scene, etc. Please send all articles, pics, comments, etc. to: The Editor, Spoke `n Piston, P.O. Box 40422, Arcadia 0007, or E-Mail to: henrih@netactive.co.za

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