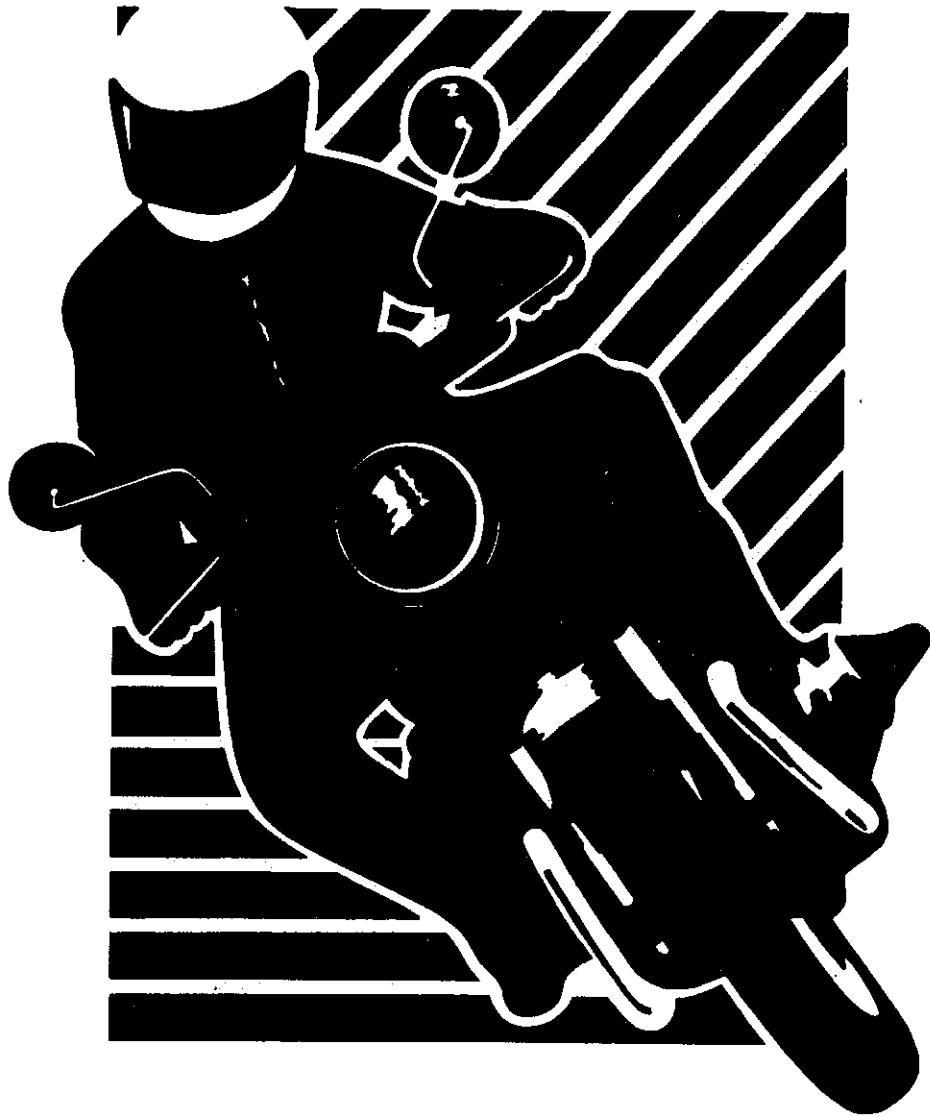


Nov 90

Good Vibrations



MOTORCYCLE TOURING CLUB OF VICTORIA

P.O. Box 453, Richmond 3121, Victoria

ITINERARY

NOV. 1990

SATURDAY 3rd to TUESDAY 6th.	SNOWY MOUNTAINS 9.30 KBCP. 10.15 Hallam.	Those going on this camping weekend would have already made the necessary arrangements for their inclusion.
SUNDAY 11th.	SOUTHERN GIPPSLAND. 9.30 KBCP. 10.15 Hallam. Jack Youdan leading.	This 400km trip will take us down to Drouin, Ranceby & Meeniyan for lunch. Then on to Tarwin Lower & Venus Bay, from here the coast road to Wonthaggi then up the highway to Cranbourne.
SUNDAY 18th.	INGLEWOOD CAVES. NW of Bendigo. 9.30 KBCP. Tony Gustus leading.	Tony will lead us up to Kynton then the back roads to Bendigo & Inglewood. After lunch we head for the caves & a look, where a change of clothes/shoes would benefit as the granite rocks can be quite rough & abrasive. Home via Maldon Castlemaine & Blackwood.
SUNDAY 25th.	LAVERS HILL. via G.O.R. 9.30 KBCP. 10.00 Laverton. Steve Leyland leading.	From Laverton, the back roads to Geelong then the GO road to Lorne, Apollo Bay & Lavers Hill for lunch. Home via Beech Forest, Forrest, Deans Marsh & back to Geelong for break-up.
<u>DECEMBER</u>		
SUNDAY 2nd.	HILLS RIDE - REEFTON. 9.30 KBCP. 10.30 Yarra Glen. Eric Makin leading.	From Yarra Glen we head north to Kinglake & Yea then down to Healesville & Warburton for lunch. If time permitts Mt Donna Buang then Reefton, Marysville & back to Healesville to finish.
THURSDAY 6th	GENERAL MEETING & CHRISTMAS SUPPER. Club Hall 8.15pm.	After the formal part of the meeting is over the pre-christmas socializing will begin. BYO drink & a plate for supper.
SATURDAY 8th	CLUB CHRISTMAS BBQ. Fairfield Park. (Melways 30 J-12) 12 noon to 4pm.	This FREE BBQ is open to all members (\$5 nonmembers) & will be held at the corner of Heidelberg Rd & Panther Pl. BYO drinks the club supplies meat and salads. Don't miss it!
SUNDAY 9th.	LEONGATHA. 9.30 KBCP. 10.15 Hallam.	This 500km run will include such places as Pakenham, Drouin, Leongatha, Dumbalk Meeniyan (lunch), Noojee, Powelltown,

MOTORCYCLE TOURING CLUB OF VICTORIA

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING

Date: 4 October 1990

Location: Jika Jika Community Hall

Open: 8.30 pm

Present: 29 members and visitors

Apologies: Anne Wurster, Jon Riddett

Minutes: Accepted by Kerrie Gooding
Seconded by Luke Richardson

Treasurer's Report:	Balance at 1st September	\$1,265.83
	add Receipts	335.90
		1,601.73
	less Payments	233.95
	Balance at 1st September	\$1,367.78

Captain's Report: **Reefton & Black Spurs** - 9/9/90
32-35 bikes, 35-37 people, 380 kms.
Ben leader, Les and Rod rear riders.
One incident. Sam's FZR fell over at a standstill - minor damage.

Australian Grand Prix - 16/9/90
Several bikes and many more people.
Overcast and cold day. Magnificent racing. Great to see Gardner win again.

Eildon Horse Riding - 23/9/90
26 bikes, 1 car, 34 people (28 horse riders).
Beautiful sunny day. A good time was had by all.
Tom and Steve alternated as leaders while Ian & Kerrie, Andi and Les took turns as rear rider
Incidents aplenty (all on horseback). None serious.

Rochester - 30/9/90
12 bikes, 13 people, 460 kms.
Fine and sunny all day
Peter leading with Ben and Vicki bringing up the rear.
One incident - Kylee's bike. Said bike shed one exhaust pipe and drank large amounts of oil.

General Business:

Badges & Patches: Have arrived. Prices are as listed in magazine.

Corner Marking: Corner markers advised to display a little more care and thought when indicating which direction other riders should follow.

Leaders advised to make corner marking system very clear to any new riders at the beginning of a ride.

Eastern Creek: Suggested that some members might like to travel in a group to next year's AGP. To be pursued later.

Guest Speaker: Ken Wooton to attend November meeting.

Invitation: To the Camperdown and Districts 'Rallage' rally.

Itinerary: New ideas required for next itinerary.

Still looking for ideas for a definite location for the Christmas camp.

Motorcycle Show: Volunteers and display material again called for.

New Zealand: Trip has been put on the back-burner at this stage.

Ocky Straps: Material for ocky straps . brought to maintenance day and used to renew old ocky straps.

Puncture Repair Kits: Are being offered to the club for \$26.00 each. There will also be one in the first aid kit instead of the old Finilec. Users will be required to reimburse the club if they use part of it so that a replacement can be purchased.

Reminder: For club members to leave the hall quietly.

Door Prize: Won by Michael. A container of Armorall and one chocolate motor bike and rider.

Closed: 9.00 pm

WHO'S NEWS

The price for EAR PLUGS published in the October newsletter should have read 30¢ a PAIR! Also the Club now has a quantity of high class ocky strap cordage which can be purchased at \$1.00 a length, hooks are then transferred over from your old frayed ocky straps.

Interested in seeing pre 1963 sports & racing cars competing in a 400 metre sprint? Then head for the GEELONG SPEED TRAILS on November 11th at Ritchie Boulevard, Geelong.

On the Strathbogie ride while lunching in Yea, Trevor Harris was seen apparently trying to attract the local cats! Why else would you pour a "Big M" all over your face?

On a recent visit to Jon Riddet's home a few members entertained themselves with a ride around the backyard on Jon's "Nifty 50" motor scooter. Luke, unaccustomed to a 2 strokes powerband & touchy brakes puts the bike down (and himself into the side of the house) to avoid a nasty accident!!! Maybe it was only the reflection, but his face sure matched the colour of his leathers.

Ben's finally got the ZX10 suspension sorted after replacing the rear shocker & giving the front forks an overhaul (shortened springs & extra fluid), he feels the handling is NOW up to scratch!!! Unfortunately the rear end didn't appreciate all this attention with the bolt that secures the rear caliper to the torque arm deciding to go walk-about while returning from the Economy ride. The lack of this bolt allowed the brake to rotate with the disc and head-butt the swing arm, fortunately no serious damage.

Since 17/2/81 Trevor Harris has only owned one make of motorcycle, the mighty YAMAHA, excepting for 9 days while in-between bikes. But sadly all this changed on 25/10/90 when Trevor purchased a new Kawasaki KL650 (Tengai). Yep a bloody "chook chaser" has replaced his "low milage" XJ900.

Darryl Chivers not having a good trot lately with tram tracks and a bumpy country road helping to put him and his GSXR1100 down recently. Fortunately Darryl's OK and the bike only suffering the usual cosmetic damage. Probably the most frustrating ordeal was the recovery of his bike from Whittlesea taking in excess of 8 hours! Seems the tow vehicle's fuel pump decided to spit-the-dummy.

It has been suggested that those members contemplating going to the Eastern Creek GP in April get together and purchase their grandstand tickets in the same stand. That way you can form a solid block and be surrounded by members and friends. Good idea but first we need to know what stands have the best views?

World Superbike Championship comes to Phillip Island on November 10th & 11th. Tickets are only available from the track and cost \$10 (Saturday), \$20 (Sunday) or \$25 (both days). The 12 event program on Sunday kicks off at 10.15am. If you can't make it down, set up the video as SBS will televise the event.

Some important dates from our December/March itinerary.

Thursday 6th.Dec.....General Meeting and Christmas Supper.

Saturday 8th.Dec.....Free Club Christmas BBQ, Fairfield Park.

Wednesday 26th.Dec.....Club Christmas Camp, Porepunkah.
till Tuesday 1st.Jan. Mt Buffalo Caravan Park.

Friday 8th.Jan.....Mt Dandenong Night Ride and countermeal.

Saturday 26th.Jan.....Tallangatta. Hotel accomodation 2 nights.
to Monday 28th.

Saturday 3rd.Feb.....Winton Sports Day and overnight stay.
& Sunday 4th.

LEADING - THE FIRST TIME

Mustering the courage to lead a ride for the first time can be quite difficult. I should know. I joined the Club in July of 1989 and it took me 15 months before I was ready to lead my first ride. I didn't really feel that much of an effort had been made to ask me but after joining the Committee, I had no such excuse.

My greatest worry, and biggest deterrent, was not being able to set a pace quick enough for the more spirited riders and having them lurking just behind me for the whole ride. In the end I managed to convince myself that other riders would not pass me and if they really wanted to go for it they could always stop for a while or mark corners.

Having committed myself to leading (which was probably the hardest part), the planning was next. The destination for my ride was selected before the route and consequently I had to lead a ride to Ballarat. The Melways seemed the best place to begin so I started looking for roads that looked the twistiest and a method of bringing them together, whilst making them varied enough to effect fuel consumption figures. Ian had suggested the RACV regional maps and after using them I can thoroughly recommend them. They are excellent as they include all of the back roads and are updated regularly. Free from the RACV, they are definitely available from the city and possibly other branches. I got a hold of these maps one week before the ride and changed the return trip as a result, adding about 30 kms of good roads.

The next step was the pre-ride. Not having led a ride before and not having covered many of the roads (or not remembering them), it was very important. Sure enough, I took the wrong turns on several occasions but being able to turn at the right place without fumbling around for the map (which was always at the ready) on the day was invaluable. One thing that I found was that I took a much more active interest in the country around me and particularly the roads I took.

I planned a stop for morning tea and one for afternoon tea, as well as the pub for lunch, to break the ride up into four parts. This seemed to be fairly usual with the Club and I was more than happy going with what seems to work. On the day it turned out that half of the riders didn't really want the afternoon break, but the pillion passengers appreciated it.

I was pretty nervous on the day and even tossed around the idea of not showing up for my own ride but common sense prevailed. One thing that was noticeable was how lonely it can be up the front. When you are one of the pack there always seem to be other riders around. When you're leading, it sometimes feels as though you're riding on your own. Surprisingly enough, it's easy to sit a little above the speed limit and everybody can still have a good time behind you. Over the course of the ride I did find that I like the idea of travelling a medium distance, which brings the quicker riders to the fore, then taking three or so corners to drop them back again, which gave me breathing space.

It turned out to be easier than I expected. It didn't go as perfectly as I had hoped but neither was it as bad as I feared. Things are pretty busy up the front. When you aren't sure where everybody is and are praying everything's going okay behind you, the day goes quickly. It was worth the effort and it feels better to have contributed, and to have given the regular leaders a chance to take a break. I also think it would be a lot easier to lead another ride.

Any and all advice was appreciated, and quite a bit of it taken. Thanks to everybody who helped out in any way, from information to advice to encouragement. For anyone considering leading a ride for the first time, approaching experienced leaders is probably the best course of action. At worst, you won't be any better off than before and at best they could trigger an idea for a great ride.

MAINTENANCE DAY (Sirianni's Garage) 7/10/90

From the Carpark:- Ben-ZX10 (leader), Alec-GSX1100, Harry-GSX750, Mick-GSX750, Darryl-GSX1100, Steve-GPX750, Andrew-CB900 (1st ride), Graeme and Brenda-Harley (1st ride), Stuart-CBR1000 & Sam-FZR100 R/rider).

This maintenance day was a little different from the others I had attended in that we incorporated a short ride before the scheduled BBQ lunch, so with Ben leading and Sam bringing up the rear we head through the usual Touring Club stamping grounds of Kew Boulevard, Warrendyte, Kangaroo Ground, St Andrews, Kinglake and Healesville. Where being a little concerned about the time, I left the ride and headed for Sam & Rita's, leaving the rest of the group heading for the scenic views of Mt Donna Buang.

Although starting out cool and overcast the day had turned sunny and warm making the 200km ride over dry and winding roads most enjoyable, arrived at Hallam about 12:20pm to find Ian & Kerrie, Tom & Andi and our hostess with the mostess, Rita in attendance. About 20 minutes later the rest of the riders rolled in, minus Darryl, Graeme & Brenda (other commitments) followed shortly after by Peter.P, Luke-GPX750, Angus-CB900 & a new couple (Mr & Mrs Chris Seamons) on a CB900 plus some friends & family of the Sirianni's.

First we got the barby firing for lunch then to work, Tom with a large audience watching, helped Harry adjust the valve clearances on his Suzuki. Harry and many of those watching, was surprised at how simple this operation really is and couldn't understand why the Pro's charge as much as they do for the same job! This fact alone is reason enough to the value of maintenance days and considering the potential kilometres a club member can travel in a year, self-servicing can equate into a substantial saving in time and money over that year.

After Harry had finished then it was Mick's turn to adjust the valve clearances (something about GSXR's needing constant servicing), while all this was going on Sam, Rita and myself made use of Tommy's high pressure cleaner on our bikes. Coupled with a liberal dose of engine degreaser the high pressure gun did a great job but unfortunately tended to highlight all our newly acquired scratches, hey Sam! Rita's bike came up OK though.

Other activities revolved around volley ball (we won 2 games to 0) and avoiding the amorous advances of Sam's 14 stone oversexed hound Max!

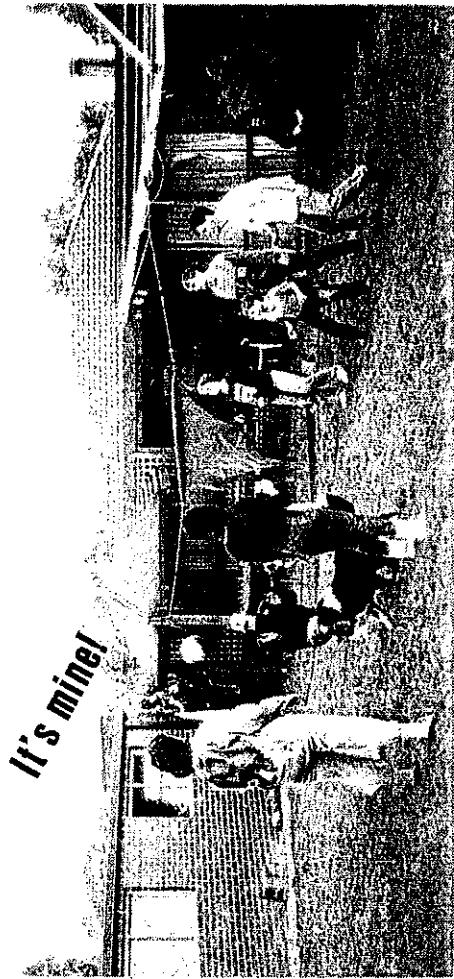
So on behalf of the 18 participants (26 in total for the day) I would like to thank Sam & Rita for the use of their home, Tom & Andi for the tools, washer and knowledge, Ben for leading the ride and Sam as rear rider these are the people who helped make the day a success and even if only one person in eighteen learned something (which was not the case) then I believe the day was worthwhile.

Steve GPX750.

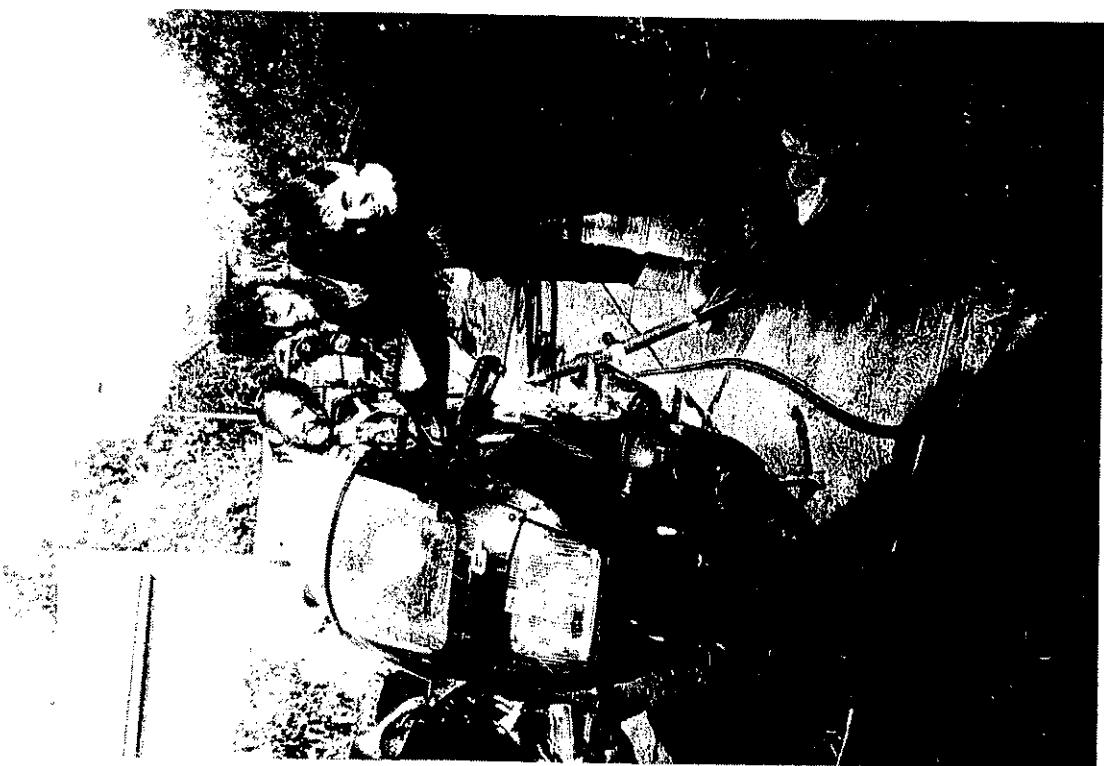


Maintenance Day 7/10/90

Give us a Kiss!



It's mine!



I think you missed a spot, Steve.

THE ADVENTURES OF TOM AND ANDI

W.A

3/8/90, we got up Friday about 5 am, Anitta took us out to the Airport , thanks Anitta for getting up so early. We purchased our stand-by tickets and played the waiting game. The plane was scheduled to leave at 8.40 am, about 9.30 we took off. We started to move off from the loading gate and one passenger was left behind, so we had to go back to get her. Only two empty seats left in the plane, lucky we got on. As I've never flown before this was quite exciting, but after 5 hours the novelty had worn off. Normally its just over 3 hours, but we had a very strong head wind. At the truck Depo we find our GS waiting in its crate, not a scratch on it. Two hours later we were on our way. The Truckies told us the best route out of Town. A very scenic tour through the Industrial area. So maybe I'll get to see Perth some other time. It was about 14° and raining, wonderful.

Tom and Andi heading North, on their trusty mount
Down came the rain, and washed them down and out.

Out came the sunshine and dried up all the rain,
Tom and Andi on their mount heading North again.

Lucky we took our really good wet weather gear, which come with an extra inbuilt feature, they leak. We stopped that night at a place called Cataby. We were in bed by 7 pm as we wern't used to the time difference.

4th. We head off for Kalbarri National Park. A stop at Port Denison and Geraldton on the way. The Township of Kalbarri is where the Murchinson river meets the sea. Along the Murchinson are plenty of gorges and lookouts.

5th. I woke up the next morning feeling sick, I was dizzy and lost my balance. I had this once in Tassie, it lasted 6 weeks. Tom done alot of fishing and I done alot of sleeping, good start to a holiday.

6th. Seems what I had is gone. We head back out to HWY 1 stopped at a few more gorges and were headed for Denham, Shark Bay. It rained all day. I have to mention we had lunch in the Overlander Roadhouse. Stopped at Nanga fishing village, Shelly beach, this was all shells no sand, Eagle Bluff, an Island where sea eagles nest and Denham, wet but not cold.

7th. 8 o'clock we were out at Monkey Mia trying to look at the tourist attraction, Dolphins, along with about 30 other people. When the busses rolled in, we left. We headed out to Peron point, which is the furthest North you can go at Shark Bay. To get their you go through Peron station and obtain permission, as its private property. This Road is a 4WD

sandy track, thick sand. Boy was I glad I didnt take my bike, sometimes a pillion seat is well appreciated. The only fish we caught were throw backs. We sighted more Dolphins in some of the small Bays. 8th. Theres a place called The Big Lagoon on Peron Station, an Inlet. A very pretty place, we stayed as we had the whole place to ourselves. 9th. We battled our way through the sand once again. Hit a tree stump at fair speed and were airborn, crashing into the sand, soft landing but smashed the crashbar well and truly. Back to Denham and HWY 1. We met a few Bikers heading for the rally, news was all roads were closed due to the rain and we couldn't get to Mt Augustus . I rang the local Shire, who informed us we could go through the Pimbee Rd to Gascoyne Junction. The road had been graded but in great condition, 140Ks no worries. Dont know about the guys on the FJ12 s. We got to Gascoyne and it started to spit, so we took off, 4 pm, 240Ks, 6.10 pm we got to Cobra Station, did it rain that night, 55Ks short of Mt Augustus.

10th. The road certainly was slimy and we only dropped the bike once. At the rally sight we find Les and his friend John and that was it. As the day progressed they slowly rolled in. We went out to Cattle Pool for a fish, to small but a nice spot. By the days end there were about 30 bikes.

11th. Climbing Mt Augustus is a 6 hour return trip makes Ayres Rock look like a soda. By the days end there were about 70 bikes. Never seen so many GS s in one place.

12th. We left the Rally site pretty early and headed through Lyndon and out through Barridale Roadhouse. We decided to head across some dirt roads towards Coral Bay, took a wrong turn and done an extra 90Ks of dirt, our petrol was low, just made it into Coral Bay. What a dump, crowded, dogs, kids and a rip off, I wouldn't recommend this place to anyone.

13th. Glad to get away we head towards Exmouth along the West coast. We found an old light house and walked about 1km across sand dunes only to find a road leading up to it on the other side. Heading North through more sand tracks through the Cape range National Park, we couldn't find a camp site without at least 10 4WDs camped. About 4Ks out of the park we found a great little place, privacy at last.

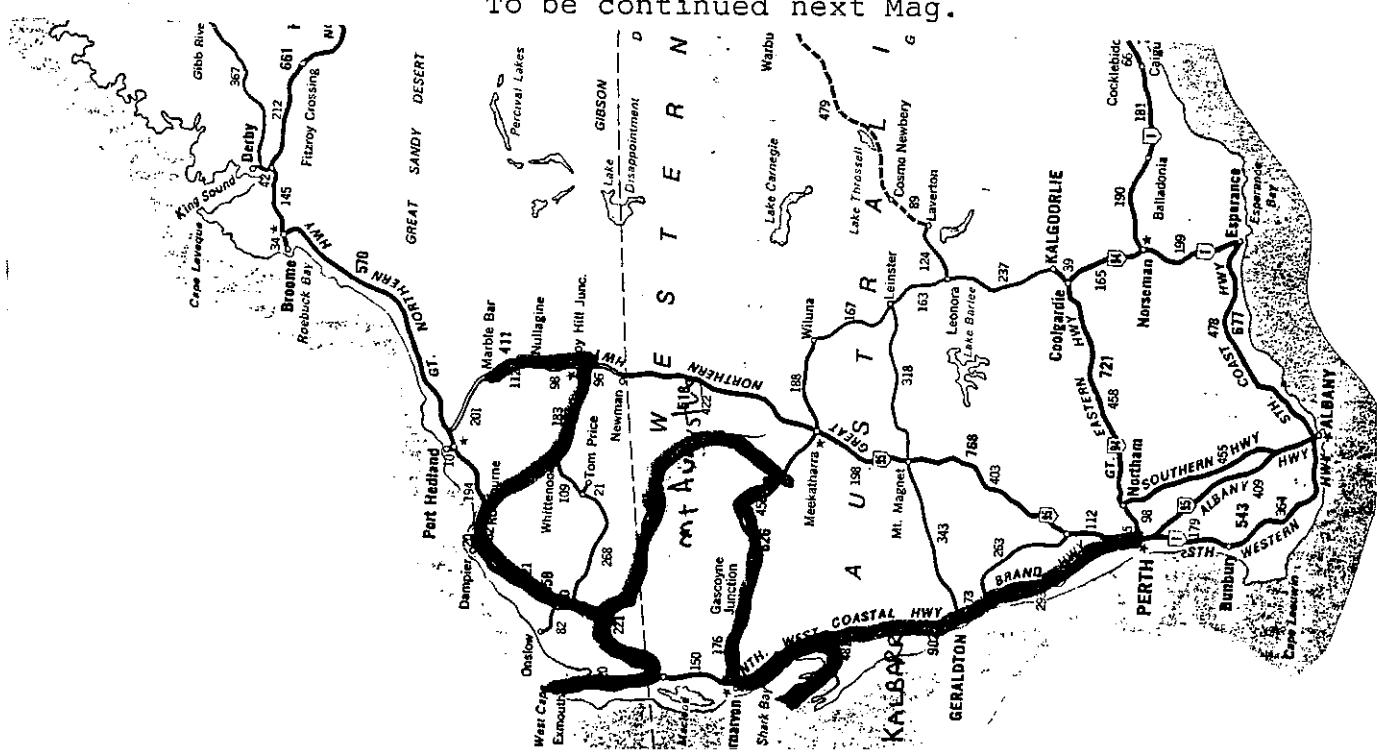
14th. Went through Exmouth and had a look at the canyons down the Shothole canyon Rd, through more dirt roads back to HWY 1. We made a bee line for Karatha, which is one of the largest Towns in W.A. Bitumen now and I get to do more riding. Stopped at Karatha for a new tyre and an oil change.

15th. As we were loading up we noticed the sub frame was cracked, after losing time it was 10am before we got going. We went to Millstream via Roeburne and through the Chichester Rangers. The first 40Ks was like riding on marbles. As we start to wind through the ranges the road suddenly turns to bitumen with corners equal to the Reefton, couldn't get going though, the view was so spectacular. A quick stop at Python Pool and off to Millstream, really worth seeing. We were going to set up camp but met a guy who used to have a 90S and new the area like the back of his hand. He told us of a place where nobody goes called Gregories Gorge, definitely a 4WD track. We followed a pipeline for a while, the road was not meant to be open to tourists. The whoopy Doos were fantastic, not enough suspension in the bike to go faster. The track into the Gorge was basically a river bed with lots of big rocks but worth it, Wow what a place, this is paradise, only one fire place to be seen for 10Ks, definitely no people evidence. We slept under the stars that night, to great to put up the tent.

16th. On the way back out we went through a river crossing and guess what the bike stalled in the middle. It took 3 hours to get it going we had to build a fire to dry the air filter. We intended to make Marble Bar, but we ran out of daylight, so we camped in a dry river bed, as its not worth riding at night, to many animals on the road.

17th. Woke up early crawled out of the river bed, as we didn't put the tent up again. We were filthy dirty full of dust, our bed, cloths and gear full of dust. Guess this is what the Abbos feel like, we even had flies trying to crawl up our noses. The Abbos along the road waved to us too. 60Ks down the road about 8am and then it happened.

To be continued next Mag.



Polly McQuinns Waterhole Strathbogie Ranges

Sunday October 14th, 1990.

Those that attended :

Scott	CB 250N	Paul	GSXR 1100
John	FZR 1000	Micheal	GSXR 750
Eric	FZR 600	Brian 1	Guzzi 850 California
Peter	GPx 250	Brian 2	Guzzi 1000 Le Mans
Luke	GPX 750 (Rear)	Jack	K100 RS
Margret	GS 650 E	Ian & Kerrie	XJ 900 (Leader)
Les	GSX 250	John & Janine	XJ 900
Alec	GSXR 1100	Trevor	XJ 900
Darryl	GSXR 1100	Steve	XL 600
Frank	GSXR 1100	Ben	ZX 10

Weather : fine, with headwinds. The first leg takes us to Lancefield via the Tullamarine freeway, Romsey and some straight roads. Ian leading on behalf of a "stuffed Tom" appears to have acquired the talent of leading todays ride into the wind, no matter where we turn. The three 250's and I (unfaired XJ) notice these small details. At Lancefield there is a delay as we wait for the Le Mans to arrive, it seems that it had developed an appetite for 15 amp fuses. The short wait is used as a 'morning smoko' by those who cannot last for more than an hour or two without food or drugs (nicotine that is).

Fed and fused, we next head onwards, taking in Pyalong and Seymour, then along the Goulburn Valley H'way to Yea. Lunch coincided with Yea, the Le Mans heading for home with the fuse blowing continuing. As if to make sure that there was a Guzzi in our group, we are joined by an 850 California. Is it compulsory to be named Brian if you own a Guzzi ? To show that these club rides are a learning experience, I learnt that it is not a good idea to blow into your BIG M drink with a straw, as it then turns into a personal fountain of sticky milk. At least it amused those watching.

Off again along the Goulburn Valley H'way, then heading for the hills, we find corners, bumps, potholes and other interesting features of the roadmakers craft. One more sideroad and then There It Was ! Polly McQuinns Waterhole ! Created by a concrete weir over Junction Creek, filled with brown water and reeds. I was told that in previous years, the club went swimming here. Glad that was before my time, as inviting it wasn't. (Personal opinion). Time for a look about before heading back via Euroa and a small touch of the Hume H'way then along some of the same roads, but in the opposite direction, to arrive once again in Yea. (Popular place, today).

The ride broke up here, with one group following Jack down the Melba H'way, another group following Ben down the great roads to Flowerdale and Kinglake West. The antics of the XJ kept those behind amused, wallowing more than a pig in sh_t. At least it's one way to stop people from passing you on corners....

Thanks to Ian and Luke for a great days ride, and the last bit of fun for the old XJ.

Trevor XJ 900 N

A footnote : The Strathbogie Ranges are interesting - challenging corners and Bloody Rough Roads - No wonder Steve came today on his Honda dirt bike, the more suspension the better....

The Economy Ride.

I know my K100 does about 60 miles per gallon in normal riding. I have added an exhaust that is reported to give up to 20% better fuel economy. Correctly inflated tyres are supposed to assist fuel economy by as much as 10%. The man on the TV the other night said that if I ride or drive passively I can save up to another 20%. I also put some of the Wynns stuff in the tank. It "improves economy" as does the oil additive. Now I have lost a lot of weight lately about 15% of my total weight so my economy should be even better. I can also disconnect three of my cylinders and use 75% less fuel. To further enhance fuel consumption I can slip stream the other bikes, turn the engine off down hills, take inside lines around corners and if I'm really serious eat baked beans and stand on the footpegs.

My K100 is now so economical that the tank fills up as I ride along.

Luke led this one, and threw in a twist. We would have to nominate our economy and get as close to it as possible. I therefore decided not to take the Nifty Fifty nor make any modifications to the BMW.

The weather gave us a season a minute, wet and rainy over Mt Macedon (what's new) and sunny and dry at Woodend. That was how the day was to be. It was also extremely blustery.

There were no incidents, even the gravel was OK. I had nominated a low economy and was going hard to meet it so I really didn't have time to take in the scenery.

Filling up in Ballarat we struggled not to fill the tanks with water as a bad rain storm hit. It was then off to the pub to work out the figures. The bad news was that we were too late for lunch but the owner took pity on us. I would too with over \$100 worth of business standing at the door.

The results.

As in previous years the rule book gets quoted and all sorts of technicalities come into play.

The name to go on the plaque would be the person with the best economy. A separate trophy would be given to the person who estimated closest.

The economy winner was Stephanie on an Aprilia 350. Has an Aprilia ever been on a club ride before? Unfortunately she is not a member so the prize went to Steve Leyland. That bloke really wanted it. He looked real happy. It wasn't his GPX but his choock chaser that got it for him. With the economy won and in the bag Steve then rode his GPX home. I'd love to have someone bring all my bikes along on a ride so I could change bike as the conditions suited. But seriously none of the other road bikes came close to that economy. With the wind and hills experienced I think it was a good effort.

The estimate winner was Luke, the leader. Having pre-ridden the course a number of times he was able to estimate to within 200 ml the amount of petrol he would use. He declined to compete however and so Peter P's equally impressive 350 ml error on his estimate got him the trophy. That really was a good effort.

The day finnished with an evening coffee at Steve's place.

I was then presented with my prize - this write up.

Thanks for a great day Luke. A good performance for a first ride as leader.

Total distance 206.5 kilometers.

Rider	Bike	Estimate	Actual	Comments.
Luke	GPX750	16.45	16.72	most accurate
Steve	XL600	30.00	24.01	the winner
Peter P	GT750	16.00	16.44	the winner
Michael	GSXR750	13.25	17.97	pessimist award
Jon	K100RS	19.8	18.32	
Hans	K100RS	20.51	21.14	
Trevor & Anne	XJ900	19.8	17.96	spacy next time
Terry	SRX600	38.00	20.88	optimist award
Ben & Vicki	ZX10	17.00	19.74	
Ian	XJ900	18.10	20.94	
Stuart & Anne	CBR1000	15.55	17.86	

First Ride

John	GPX750	23.00	18.93	Steve's driver
Marcus	Aprilia 600	20.00	14.32	Wooden Spoon.
Stephanie	Aprilia 350	25.00	24.18	real winner
Adam & Inga	XJ750	23.25	18.15	

Jon Riddett (Bent Honda QH50.)

BY ART FRIEDMAN

I'm not as good a rider as I used to be. I put so much time in at work since I got promoted, and with two kids now, I have more commitments at home, too. When I get on the bike, I just want to ride. I don't feel like going to a parking lot to work on my riding technique."

"So why not practice during your normal rides?"

"What could I practice then?"

"Just about everything—and you might work on a few skills that you can't attack in a parking lot."

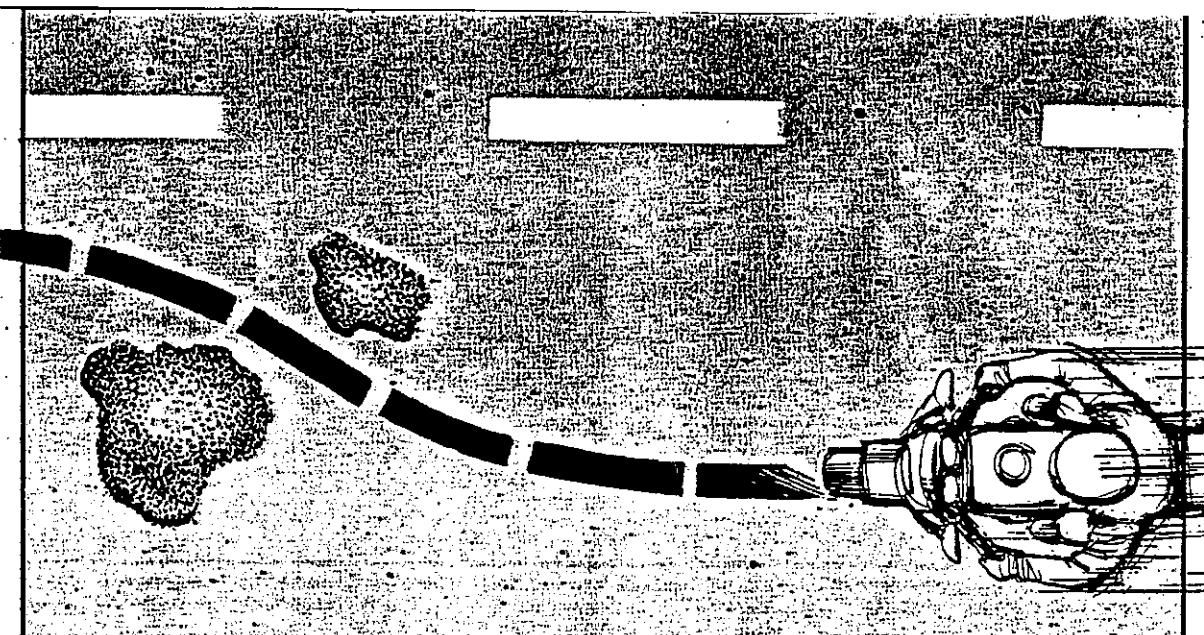
It's true. Our lives are getting busier. It can be hard to find time to eat and sleep, much less to devote to practicing your braking or countersteering. But with a little imagination and forethought, you can incorporate some skill-development routines into your rides.

PERFECTLY PRECISE

How precisely can you position your bike? Precise placement is important

PERFECT PRACTICE

Practice is the way to proverbial perfection. The best way to practice many riding skills may be during everyday rides



when you are suddenly confronted with debris on a crowded road or strewn through a turn. Can you thread this unexpected needle? Practicing this skill helps and also reinforces your countersteering habits, because you have to countersteer to successfully thread the needle.

Here is my routine. When making a lane change on California freeways, I like to look over my shoulder to check traffic. Then, as I shift my vision forward to change lanes, I pick a gap between the raised lane markers and attempt to slip both wheels through it. If I miss, I know it because I feel the thump. Besides being good training, this exercise is a good evaluation tool when testing a bike to get a feel for the subtleties of steering and response. On a bike you're familiar with, a change in behavior can tip you to wear in the steering-head bearing or tire tread.

A rider once told me about an exercise he and his friends performed to evaluate their abilities to handle unexpected obstacles in turns. On their weekend rides, part of the group rode ahead and taped

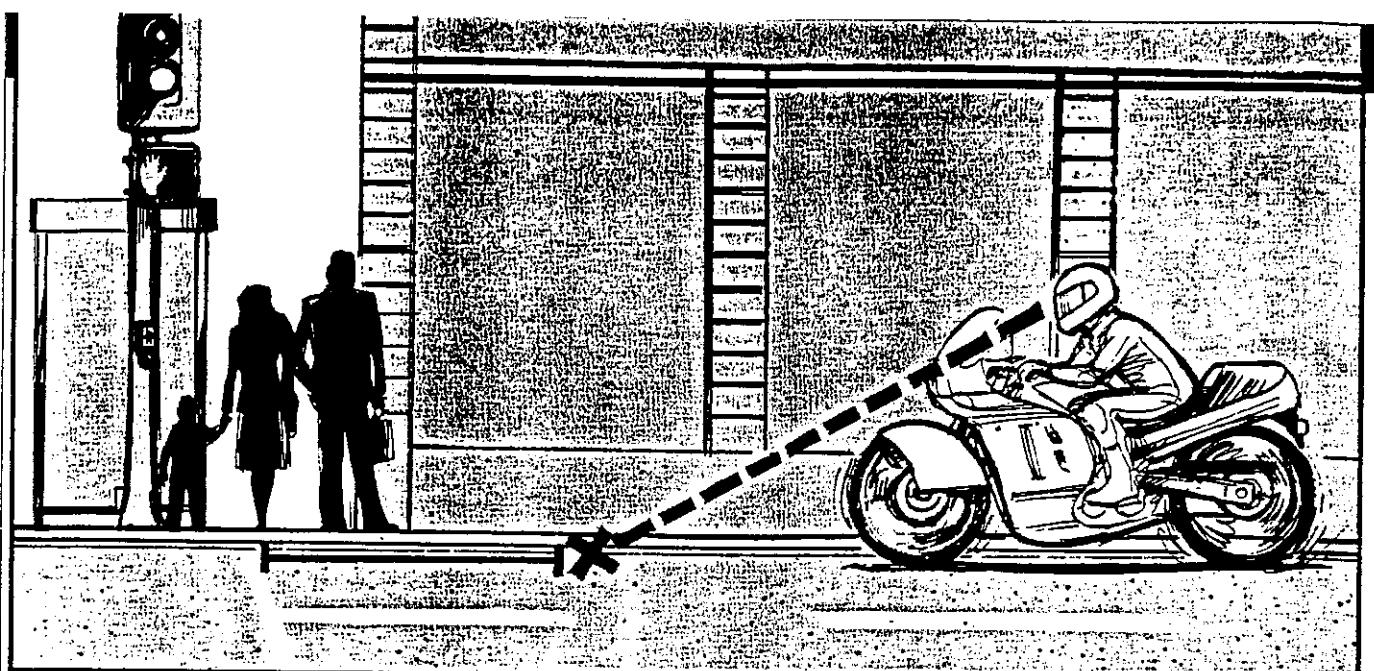
pieces of bright paper to the road in blind corners. Riders in the second group had to avoid them without crossing the centerline, and the guy who laid out the practice obstacles was standing there watching so riders couldn't fib. You can do the same by deciding to avoid dark or light spots on the pavement. Small potholes or patches also make good obstacles because you can feel when you nick them.

Why not pick a spot and aim for it? Part of what you're trying to do is learn how to *avoid* obstacles, which is different—and more difficult—psychologically than hitting a target. In addition to learning exact steering control, you are training yourself to avoid target fixation. I make the hole or the space between objects the target in my mind. This technique also helps in traffic; focus on the hole between cars ahead and think of that gap as the object you are following rather than the cars themselves. Then, when you have to escape from a crisis, you're already mentally aimed at your escape route.

PERIPHERAL PERFECTION

There are other exercises that are more psychological than physical. For example, you can condition yourself to better use your peripheral vision. When waiting at an intersection, practice concentrating on seeing what is going on at the very edges of your vision. Look at the car waiting across the intersection. Then, without turning your head or your eyes, see how much you can tell about the last car you can see on either side that's waiting to turn left from the cross street. A further challenge is to monitor the traffic ahead of you and try to use your peripheral vision to watch what's going on in your mirrors. It's tough.

Conditioning yourself to see this way can help you see better when you approach an intersection by preparing you to focus your attention on the danger zones. While watching the oncoming cars waiting to turn left (your maximum danger zone), you also need to keep track of the cross traffic which might blow through the light or simply overlook you and turn right in front of you. Fortu-



To practice hard stops on the street, pick a target well before the point where you must stop. This gives you a cushion if you can't get stopped in as short a distance as you expect. Check your mirrors first to avoid surprising the driver behind you.

nately, your peripheral vision is well suited to picking up this sort of movement. You're just conditioning yourself to use it better. If you have trouble using your peripheral vision, it's an indication that you are probably getting tired.

Here's a bonus tip to consider as you approach an intersection. If you are the only traffic going your way and a line of oncoming left-turning traffic is waiting for you, watch out for the second or third car in line. Maybe the driver can't see you and decides the lead car is being far too cautious, so he or she just cuts inside the first car instead of waiting for the "overcautious jerk." The shortcutter may feel bad about it while you're riding to the hospital. You'll feel better if you see and react to the car in time to swerve or stop.

PERFECT EXITS

Another skill you can practice at an intersection is leaving it. Every ninth blue moon, the ability to leave in a hurry is a lifesaver. Being struck from the rear is rare and the motorcyclist who sees and recognizes he or she is about to be rear-ended is even rarer, but learning to leave is fun and occasionally useful. It is fairly easy on middleweights with moderate power and little tendency to wheelie or spin the tire. It takes more skill on small, peaky bikes that require precise throttle and clutch coordination to avoid bogging or large bikes that can overwhelm their rear tires if the rider gets too enthusiastic with the throttle or horses out the clutch.

With practice you can become familiar with the drill for your bike. Precise clutch control is one key. An awareness of traction, getting your weight forward (to reduce wheelie-inducing rear-weight transfer) and a feel for your bike's power characteristics all contribute to consist-

ently strong, straight, safe exits. Maybe someday one of these Terry Vance-replica departures will be the ideal way to leave the scene of the accident—the one that didn't happen.

PERFECT PAUSES

Skillful braking requires regular practice. If you don't exercise your braking skills, they deteriorate. To brush up on your skills and keep in touch with how hard your bike can stop, practice braking hard from various speeds during the stops you have to make anyway. Check your tire pressure, brake-lining condition and other relevant items before you start. Ideally, you should practice in areas where the pavement is level and clean and traffic can't appear unexpectedly to turn your practice into the real event. Some isolated, parking-lot practice is essential occasionally.

Work up gradually to your level of skill, and don't try to find the absolute edge of your ability and your bike's; that can turn into the accident you're trying to avoid. Remember to squeeze the front brake, don't grab it. Do get a feel for how your bike responds to sudden, hard brake inputs and how hard it stops. Feel the effectiveness of each brake and how the bike's weight shifts to the front wheel, demanding more front brake power for a short stop.

Braking practice is particularly useful after you have installed new tires or brake pads or equipment that alters the way your bike handles. Don't forget to properly scrub the new tires and seat the new brake pads before practicing. You might also want to get a feel for how your bike responds when you have added a passenger or cargo. Just be sure your passenger knows what's coming,

and recognize that the lighter your bike, the more a passenger alters (always for the worse) the way it responds to control inputs of all types.

It's worthwhile to experiment with different finger configurations on the brake lever. Some bike-rider combinations respond quickest and stop well with two fingers over the front brake lever, but with others this arrangement leads to the two fingers on the grip being trapped between lever and grip in a hard stop. Some motorcyclists can ride their bikes comfortably with all four fingers on the lever, which is ideal because it permits quick reaction time without the danger of trapped fingers and provides excellent lever feel. You might be able to achieve this if you adjust the lever. You can also use these practice sessions to analyze how your rear brake pedal might be adjusted for quicker reaction or better control. Maybe the height should be changed or the pedal bent out to better connect with your foot.

You can sharpen your braking skills during daily rides, too. Every stop sign and red light is an opportunity to practice your skills. If you know the intersection is clear and no one is sniffing at your tail-light, test your judgment of stopping distance. Pick a spot a few car lengths before the intersection, hold a steady speed and wait until the last point where you think you can start braking to get stopped by the spot you have picked. Once you're certain of your stopping point, you can relax and make the rest of your stop a bit less intense, though panic stopping occasionally all the way to zero teaches you what to expect from your bike as it lurches to a stop after full-goose-bozo braking.

Skills practice doesn't have to involve a special sanitized facility, and it doesn't have to be boring. But you should get some practice in and constantly consider your approach to situations. When you engage in an activity as complex as motorcycling, there is always something more to learn and master. Ask Wayne Rainey if he hasn't improved his skills recently.

EDITORIAL

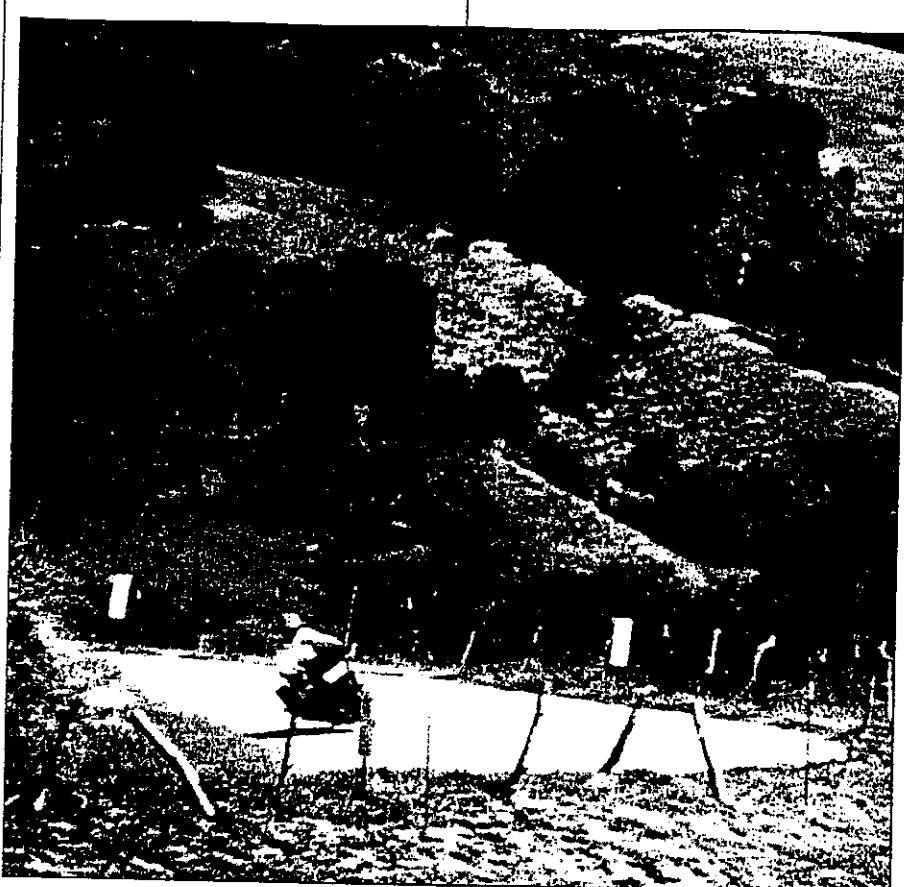
DO IT NOW

What a difference a decade makes! Back in January 1980, this column contained an editorial under the same headline written by a previous editor. The point of that column was to urge readers to quit dreaming about motorcycling adventures and to go out and start living them.

I bear the same message, but for different reasons. Back in 1980, the writer had apparently had a depressing week or eaten some bad sushi. He painted a picture of impending doom: The next oil shortage (scheduled for 1982, he said) would force the Soviets to invade the Middle East to get the oil they needed, which would leave the average Western motorcyclist with about enough oil allotment to lube his clutch cable once a year. Alternately, this might bring the final showdown (we are talking about an even bigger confrontation than our 1991 superbike shoot-out here). That confrontation would leave the planet a cinder, which at the very least would make it hard to get parts and service for your Ducati.

The good news, as you may have guessed, is that we survived 1982. We even survived 1984, a year given an ominous prelude by another writer. In fact, I just checked the evening news, and it seems as if we as a species might make it clear through this decade (though judging by this column's past record, I wouldn't make any major plans based on what you read here about the future geopolitical situation).

Nonetheless, I do think that putting your motorcycling dreams on hold is still a bad idea. I recently returned from nine days of touring the northwest (last month's touring comparison). Though I had a wonderful time, I kept being forced to make unwanted comparisons to what I experienced when we made an almost identical trip exactly 10 years before. Everywhere we went, we could see civilization pressing in: a few more condos where it used to be just untouched coastline, more areas where the lumber had been cleared out (with signs telling you it had been replanted) and city limits and lowered speed limits showing up a little sooner and a little more often than they used to. I experienced more traffic on roads that used to be out in the boonies, fewer places to pass on Highway 1 in northern California because the double yellow has been extended from Mill Valley almost to the Oregon state line and a general-



I'm getting older, and putting off dreams until tomorrow is a good way to let them get away forever.

ly reduced sense of escape.

The same progression is true of almost any street-riding activity. In 1980, my favorite racetracks were Ontario and Aspen. They're gone. The good back roads I used to ride on weekends are now far more crowded, heavily patrolled and marked for reduced speeds. I used to know a wonderful place to ride a dual-purpose bike off-road all day and not see another soul. It has been fenced off and posted, and the word is housing developments will spring up soon. The point is that although motorcycles will get better every year, it is going to be tough to duplicate the 1990 motorcycling experience if you put it off until 2000.

Another event put me into this train

of thought. Last fall, Malcolm Forbes called to talk about his annual fun ride. He'd never ridden in Mexico, he said, and he really wanted to do that. Summer, the usual season for those rides, was taken by some other project. Maybe in February, he thought. Then he reconsidered. February would be difficult, better wait until September. As it turned out, he won't be able to go then either. That turn of events made me aware that I'm getting older and that putting off dreams until tomorrow is a good way to let them get away forever. Day-to-day life has a way of obscuring the big picture, and it would be too bad to miss a major event in my life just because I wouldn't take the time or effort to go after it. Our 1980 ride to Vancouver was the most memorable tour I'd ever taken, and after our 1990 ride was over, I was glad I didn't let schedules, organizing hassles or other hurdles keep me from doing it again.

You get there through less depressing reasoning, but the conclusion of that editorial of 10 years ago rings even truer today. "Better get as many good times on your bike as you can now, while you still can. Make the riding season of 1980 the one to remember. Start doing it now."

—Art Friedman