



Officials News & Views

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MNZ Stewards Commissioner
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Back again, so what's been happening about the place these days. One thing, we changed the name of this newsletter. I guess as we haven't got the Clerk of Course data base up and running but we have got training for all officials happening around the country, then this should represent officials rather than just Stewards.

We have visited twice so far this year, our Auckland visit proving to be better than I expected with a good turnout of people to hear the message and a good reaction from all that were there. We were very pleased with that visit; I didn't get to the bar until about 6.30pm. Not a worry, it's great to have people who have problems or just want to know something or indeed just want to hear what's happening outside their world and they wait around to talk and ask, it's what we are there for.

Now I have said this before but if you are a warranted official you need to get to a seminar near you because if you don't then your warrant and your Stewarding record will be examined to see whether we should keep you on our books or not. I have to say that in the main most of our Stewards have been performing extremely well, some are setting the bar but most are up with the play. If you are in a "situation" that for some reason is not going to work for you or for the riders or officials then back off, notify me as soon as you can and get another Official to act in your place. Please don't put yourself in a place that may bring chaos down on your head. You may want to look carefully at a request to Steward or C of C at an event and assess whether you are the right person for that job or not. There's a host of reasons why a person might not fit and it's far better to get that settled before you start than get into problems halfway through.

Our second visit was to Nelson, again a way better seminar than I expected, I was able to fill the Marlborough District Stewards position which was vacant, John Pudney putting his hand up for that one, thanks very much John. Also one message coming from that Seminar was very strong in that there was some discontent with the requirement to inspect safety gear, helmets particularly, when that responsibility should be on the rider, not the official. Various scenarios were discussed but the final idea was that we change the rules to allow that, place the responsibility in the MNZ disclaimer in line with the bike inspection requirement, putting it squarely on the rider to comply with our requirements in section 8 of the Manual. Seemed reasonable to me, I have never been comfortable with anything other than a visual check and a fitting check. When we held the Officials workshop at the AGM the same message came through loud and clear from the floor of the workshop and was in respect of all safety gear.



Now obviously we need to retain the right of officials to inspect if they see a need, black singlet's are commercially available and they may cover front and rear but body armour they ain't. So would I stop a rider wearing a black singlet at a motox and no body armour? Sure as hell would. So, the rule book is being overhauled and these rules will be changed. I can state that quite clearly cause I am one of those involved with the rule book change.

So, was the AGM a success, yes very much so, I got to meet with people I only knew by name, I got stuck with the job of consultant I guess is the right word, on the rule book rewrite, I didn't get our raincoats but that is a work in progress anyway. Our president was re-elected which to me was a good thing because I hadn't heard a word about officials training in Chris's CV and Jim is right into it so that was a good thing. It was a close run affair but it was a clear indication of the apathy that exists out there in motorcycle racing land. Why on earth were there only 500 odd votes out of 5000+ eligible voters? Come on people, we are the representatives of MNZ so it's up to us to urge people to vote for these things so let's be proactive should this sort of situation arise.

I got to meet lots of people I have known for years but lost touch with as we, Marie and I have not been involved with MNZ for many years until 18 months ago. We were regulars at ACU conference for many years then MNZ when the name changed, but we could see the writing on the wall after a memorable conference where the politics were clearly exposed for all to see so we quit. We had a club to look after, a very good club which we are both proud to be life Members of, and we figured that would keep us occupied for what riding and organising time we had left on Gods good earth, but you know, life's a funny old thing, you get comfortable with what you are doing, no damned politics, no problems and one evening the phone goes," how do you feel about doing some more for the cause". Oh hell I don't know about that, but you can see that things are different than back then, different people, different ideas, a chance to see the organisation become something a lot better than the old one, a chance to be involved in this change, a chance to renew old friendships, to make new ones so you put your hand up. Do I regret the last 18 months? Not a bit, I do need a decent phone though wonder if Vicky will get me a new I4, might test the waters there.

Anyway, some of those improvements are coming through now, for us one tiny thing, we won't have to drag the licence out of the logbook to check the signature. Great, Tuckerman won't catch me on that one again. No reason why you can't have a Stewards Vest, contact Emma, she will see you right. The rule book will be re done, Jungle did it a couple of years ago, and the disc has been unearthed and is in Bob Cooke's hands so the bones will be picked on that one. Don't tell me you are not getting top service from front office 'cause those ladies are doing a sterling job.

There are further improvements in the grinder; I am on the Trail Ride working party as an adviser, something to do with the fact that I was one of the four that originally set up the Laid Back Trail Ride scene in Nelson I guess. Anyway, progress has been made on that job a broad policy has been formulated and the DVD is still in rough copy due to production problems, and initially it will apply to MNZ Trail Rides but who knows where (if successful) it will go.

One repercussion is that our rule book will cease to be "general competition rules" and revert to its proper name of Manual of Motorcycle Sport or most likely referred to as the Manual. Why, because Trail Rides are not competition but, let's face it, one of the most successful parts of motorcycle sport we have.

I have most recently been involved with Track inspection. Most, if not all of you do it anyway but it is now a part of our competition procedure, particularly for Street Races. It's not personal, somebody will turn up and look at the Greymouth track before we start, we may not know they are coming but that's cool, probably



someone will look at Nelson before it happens, I won't get cross about it cause its just another safety measure that we must have, Labour Dept say we have a best industry practice rating with them, this is just another thing we need to do to stay there with them. Was great to be at Methven though, those guys did a real great job from the Steward on through, what a sight around the fringes, chrome and black paint for miles. Yes Buddha , I can hear you, but it was a sight to see, plus four trikes each with V8s in them, god you would not think there was a petrol price problem, not much below 1000cc, off track anyway.

Now, I have spoken to a number of Stewards as regards "Series Stewards." The need became apparent during the Cross Country series where we scrambled to supply Murray with strong Stewards to try to counter the problems he had with cheating. We were successful in that we supplied the Stewards he needed, Big thanks to Sandy, Lyn, Jan, and specially John Tootall. We did not have adequate Stewarding in place by the Tuesday before the final at New Plymouth, Tommo was not available, Lyn had done the Hawkes Bay round and John was just back from Australia but agreed to do that round. He has my profound thanks for that. He had a couple of difficult decisions there but did what was required, a great job.

So, NI rounds of Motox will be Tommo, maybe the SI round also, with senior club Stewards in attendance and club Stewards in training. Supercross is Sandy's job, the second at Supercross will be a senior club Steward, again with club Stewards in training. Enduro will be Alan Chant; second will be from the local club and under training. John Tootall will be Steward for all championship Cross Country rounds held in the NI and Jan Kazmiersky for all Rounds Held in the SI. Both these Stewards will be training club Stewards as they go. In all cases the second steward will be from the club or area the event will be held in. Until I know better trials will continue as it is but that may change after I consult with Jim. In all cases the District Steward will appoint club Stewards to attend Championship rounds for training and assessment. I will be talking with Buddha regarding road racing but I think we have our stewards there, just need to consult beforehand.

If there is a necessity the Club will be responsible for the series Stewards accommodation, MNZ for travel expenses. Now I know that most of you do not charge for your work but you are entitled, check the Manual if you doubt me.

The passing out of penalties area will change in some instances, who does what, where or when, that's in the pipeline and you will be notified of any rule change to allow that to happen.

That's my lot for now, I have ATV Motox to steward on Queens Birthday and ATV speedway same weekend, what a blast then down about November the NZ MINI's at Westland. Oh Joy, Oh happiness.

Remember--- Be kind to each other; because folks;

----- We are worth it -----