



Central North Island Newsletter – December 2016 (Issue 4)

Welcome to the 4th issue of the IAM CNI newsletter. In this issue, we cover progress on our priorities, continue profiling active members and cover some technical stuff on tyres.

Mentoring Priorities

As mentioned previously, Glenn Berridge is the only Observer in the B.O.P and with me being the only one in the Waikato (and located in remote Coromandel!); the priority is to get more Observers into the system.

Practical coaching of Trainee Observers Lloyd Hollis (Hamilton) and Rob Van Proemer (Pokeno) has been going well and they remain on track to take their full Observer tests in early 2017. Trainee Observer Mark Revill-Johnson (Cambridge) will commence practical coaching in early 2017. What we have been doing whenever possible is to rotate active Associates on observed rides with Lloyd and Rob to get a double win. It not only gives the Trainee Observers regular coaching exposure, but now allows Associates to receive mentored rides every 6 weeks or so. The writer has also been running the occasional solo one on one observed ride when Lloyd and Rob are unavailable to pair up. End of month mentored rides with the Auckland team are also available for those within reasonable travelling distance. It's a good opportunity to network with other riders!

Several Associates have been able to take regular advantage of the rotational system and are closing in on a pre-Advanced Test cross-check. Congratulations on your enthusiasm and we look forward to Advanced Test time in the very near future!

CNI Social rides

Lloyd Hollis ran an excellent ride to Raglan last year and last month, Auckland Trainee Observer Tessa Christmas ran a ride round the southern Coromandel Loop which received great feedback. It is hoped to organise more local social rides in 2017 but the priority for the immediate future remains on observed rides for more Advanced Test passes and additional Observers in the region.

Membership info summary (Waikato/BOP)

Active Observers: 2 (1 Waikato, 1 BOP)

Active Trainee Observers: 3

Active Associates: 6

It's also an opportune time to welcome Associate Lawrence (Goose) Gosnell from Cambridge back as a regular participant after

having spent time on national Ulysses committee business. Great to catch up again Goose!

Also, a warm welcome to Rex Stentiford from Tauhei near Morrinsville. Rex expressed an interest in IAM at the National Motorcycle Show and recently joined as an Associate and rides a BMW 1200 GS and a Victory cruiser.

Other items of note

Taking the Advanced Test and Observer Tests. With no Examiner available in the CNI, it means that Associates and Trainee Observers have previously had to travel to Auckland for their respective tests. It is recognised that travelling substantial distances on top of the test itself can place an additional burden on the candidate. It is particularly challenging for candidates in the southern and eastern parts of the CNI.

Following a discussion with Philip McDaid, Chief Examiner; there is room for movement on a case by case basis to achieve an equitable solution in terms of the location of the tests. We will discuss this with the individuals concerned when they are close to taking their respective tests.

Making our regional roads more motorcycle friendly.

IAM Members may remember a joint initiative between ACC and NZTA to improve the Southern Coromandel Loop for road users in general but particularly for motorcyclists. Broadly, the pilot initiative covered improved road markings and signage, road upgrades, attention to roadside hazards and better access for emergency vehicles, especially helicopters. A brochure on that pilot scheme is here:

<http://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/traffic/driving-safely/docs/safer-rides-leaflet.pdf> .

The initiative is now being extended to the Northern Coromandel Loop. In a private capacity, the writer, Paul Quilter and Lawrence Gosnell were recently invited to a meeting in Hamilton with NZTA, ACC and a consultant, along with a small number of other motorcyclists from the region. Preliminary ideas for Northern Loop improvements were discussed and input sought from the experienced motorcyclists. In summary, it was a productive and practically-focused meeting which bodes well for future action. The IAM members present were quizzed extensively about the Roadcraft approach to riding. The proposed improvements to signage and road markings are based on the work by Dr Alex Steadman, who is an IAM member in the UK. He is due to visit NZ in 2017.

Meet the Team

In this issue, we continue the profiling of active motorcycle members within the Central North Island, especially as it's such a geographically large area. This time, it's the turn of Mark Ball.



**Mark Ball (R) and Rob Van Proemeran (L)
with Mark's current 'wing**

Hi everyone, my name is Mark Ball and I live in the quiet little town of Te Aroha, quiet being the operative word when I first moved here. I wanted to run around and make noise just to see if there was anyone alive it was so quiet. I am presently a real estate agent doing business in Te Aroha and Hamilton and anywhere in between. Prior to that I spent 20 years in the tobacco trade which I must say was an interesting industry to be in with so many changes to adapt to, but I did enjoy it. One day I was working on filling a cigarette machine at the local casino when a lady walking past asked if I smoked? I asked why did she ask? She said because you have a vehicle full of cigarettes. I asked her what she would have asked me if my van had been full of condoms???

She smiled and walked away. Motorcycles in my life started with an ER175 Suzuki as a farm bike as my working life started out working on farms. I have had much fun on trikes and 4 wheelers, especially the trike on sandy races and tight corners. My first private vehicle was an XL175 which got a hard life on and off-road, I traded that in as parts on a XR250, the model with the 23 inch front wheel, great for wheelies not that I should be admitting that on here I guess ha-ha.

Once I left farming cars took over from motorbikes for several years until commuting became a daily grind and I bought a mint condition XT400 which I loved to bits, a car going through a give way in front of me ended the life of the XT. Next in line was a Suzuki Impulse 400, my first ever road bike. Now that took some getting used to but was a nice ride for the trip Cambridge to Hamilton most

days. I sold that once it started to cost a bit in repairs and went back to cars but that didn't last long when a KDX200 became my toy for playing around on in the weekends, I had a lot of fun on that and so did my son.

Another XT400 came along but I had gotten older and throwing a bike around off road started to hurt and the body started to complain so after a lull of again no bike I started to investigate tourers. I wanted a Goldwing but could not find one to test ride so it nearly became a Harley as my next purchase until I was saved by a phone call from a chap with a 2004 Goldwing for sale. One kilometre and I was hooked, I had my first tourer a GL1800 and I loved it, so glad I had not bought a Harley.



The first Goldwing

Bit of a financial squeeze hit and the Goldwing had to go but not for long, within a year there was a 2012 Goldwing with all the fruit parked in the garage, yes the finance company owned a bit but I was happy I was back on a Goldwing.

I have been down the south island for several "rides" and have participated in the 1KC twice to date; having a Goldwing is all about the long way home.

I first spotted some IAM chaps when they pulled into BP Bombay and I asked who they were and what they did and here I am now under the wing (excuse the pun) of Geoff and Rob, they are doing a great job of getting me smoother and safer on the Wing.

Mark

Tyre product review – Michelin PR4

I recently put new rubber on the bike so have thrown in a few observations for anyone who is remotely interested.

These days, we're spoiled for tyre choice to the point of being overwhelmed. It very much depends on "fitness for purpose". Pure sport tyres have great grip in dry, warm conditions, not so good in the wet as it's harder to get heat into them. They also have a limited life. The OEM Dunlop D214 rear sport tyre which my Suzuki

GSX-S 1000 came equipped with was worn out in just **3700 km!!** I didn't trust it in the wet and replacing it at these intervals would bankrupt me!



Ruined D214 at 3500 km from new

For riding in all weathers, a sport touring tyre was the obvious choice for me. Many makes have dual compound construction with a harder centre for longevity and softer outer tread for grip when leaned over. Stiffer sidewalls for heavier bikes are also an option on several major brands. On my Street Triple and then on the Suzuki, I've been a big fan of Michelin PR4 tyres, principally because of outstanding wet weather performance and life. I routinely got 15,000 km from a rear on the Triple and have just replaced the PR4's on the Suzuki at 12,500 km which is quite pleasing. It had reached the 1.5 mm tread depth limit in the centre but had retained its profile quite well.



Rear PR4 @12500 km

The PR4's give me everything I currently want from a tyre but the newly-released Metzler Roadtec 01's have been getting great reviews so thought I'd get a set fitted to compare with my favourites.

I booked a fitting at Boyd Motorcycles in Hamilton, rode down and they started replacing the tyres within a minute or two of arrival. Only took about an hour to do and their prices are pretty sharp – check tyre prices out on their website. A well-deserved rep for a dealer in our region.

It's far too early to compare them with the PR4's but I'll do that in due course.

The real trick is to sort out what you really want from a tyre but if most of your riding is on public roads, a sport touring tyre offers longevity and performance in both wet and dry conditions.



New rear Metzler Roadtec 01

All that remains is to wish everyone a splendid and safe festive season. As always, we're looking for suggestions, questions, or contributions to the newsletter so we'd love to hear from you. Catch you in 2017!

Best regards,

Geoff James
Senior Observer, CNI
geoff.james74@gmail.com