

## Central North Island Newsletter – Jan 2018 (Issue 9)

Firstly, every good wish for a safe and successful 2018! 2017 was a watershed year for CNI with multiple passes at Advanced Test level and a growth in the number of Observers and Trainee Observers. Congratulations to everyone – the hard work has really paid off. Also, special thanks to the Observing Team who have gone well beyond normal expectations to ensure that Associates have received regular mentoring. The result speaks for itself.

Thanks also to the Auckland Observers who have provided additional cross-check support for CNI Associates closing in on the Advanced Test. In addition, let's not forget the massive support from Philip McDaid and Morne De Lange in actually carrying out the examinations for CNI members!

The Central North Island continues to grow at pace with a current total of 23 fully paid members. The challenge is to not overload the existing Observers. We are very close to capacity until the existing Trainee Observers pass their Observer Tests. It requires some careful juggling but being driven by demand is a nice problem to have! More on this further on in the newsletter.

### Mentoring progress

Huge congratulations to John Chittenden from Lake Okareka (Rotorua) on his Advanced Test pass. John's pass was especially well deserved as he's one of the southernmost CNI members and he has had to travel substantial distances on his Honda Blackbird to undertake mentored rides. Thanks to all members of the observing team who have given up their time to mentor John.



**John Chittenden**

At the time of writing, there are a number of Associates closing in on the Advanced Test so every good wish to them for a successful outcome.

### New Associates

A very warm welcome to Marius (Swanie) Swanepoel and Andrew Turnbull, both from Tauranga. It's hoped that in due course, the B.O.P will become an IAM region in its own right. Swanie and Andrew both joined following an invitation from Waikato Ulysses to IAM to make a presentation to their monthly meeting. Waikato Ulysses club Coordinator Jim Galt will shortly be having his initial assessment ride.

Bike Rider magazine Assistant Editor Sean Willmot had an initial assessment before Christmas. We're looking forward to him joining IAM and seeing some articles about his progress towards the Advanced Test!



**Tony Knight briefing Sean Willmot**

Also welcoming brand new Associate Blair Skelton. Blair lives in Pukekohe, rides a GSX-S1000F and we look forward to meeting him soon.

We have also had a recent enquiry from a Taranaki-based rider who has shown amazing enthusiasm by being willing to travel to the Waikato for mentoring. It would be great to expand IAM into Taranaki and whilst it may just be possible to help with the enquiry in due course, the biggest current benefit to IAM is to strengthen and consolidate our presence in the Waikato and BOP.

For existing Associates, it's absolutely fine to ask if you feel that you're not getting out as regularly as you prefer. Although you have an allocated

Observer with overall responsibility for mentoring, the observing team has a broader responsibility for ensuring that all Associates receive mentoring on a regular basis. If the designated Observer is temporarily unavailable for whatever reason, then another Observer may assist. The same principle applies in the case of Trainee Observers with their designated Observer.

### **Observer Training Courses**

The next combined CNI and Auckland course was due to be run on Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> at the Franklin A&P show HQ, Pukekohe. However, some of the presenting team will be on leave and with some more Associates from CNI and Auckland close to taking the Advanced Test, the decision has been taken to defer it until March 17/18 to get a better attendance.

The last course was in October – photos below.



**Rob VP explaining a technical point at the last course**



**Hard at work on the theory but plenty of laughter**

Many of the participants seemed genuinely surprised at just how much emphasis was placed on interpersonal skills as well as technical riding aspects. The technical stuff is fairly straightforward but it's the people-related aspects which are most likely to cause problems if not handled correctly.

Despite the hard work and intensive nature of the course, there was plenty of opportunity for fun and laughter as part of the learning process and everyone came away having enjoyed themselves.

The Observers always enjoy playing the role of an Associate during the practice rides \*sly grin\*.

It's great to mix the members from different regions and we'll continue running courses at Pukekohe for those who wish to continue on to become Observers.

### **CNI strategy for 2018**

As previously reported, the main focus is to ensure that we can deliver high quality regular mentoring at all levels to achieve a *sustainable* growth in the CNI.

There's a small amount of "wriggle room" for new Associates depending on their location and availability (weekday/weekend). However, getting existing Associates and Trainee Observers through their respective tests is the priority for achieving balanced growth.

All parties should feel perfectly comfortable to request assistance if there is likely to be any known delay in getting out regularly on mentored rides.

### **Your CNI observing team**

Active Observers: 4 (3 Waikato, 1 BOP)  
Rob Van Proemerem (Pokeno), Lloyd Hollis (Hamilton), Glenn Berridge (Tauranga), Geoff James (Coromandel)

Trainee Observers: 6  
Chris Smith (Bombay country area), Mark Revill-Johnson (Cambridge), Chris McKinnon (Hamilton), Lawrence Gosnell (Cambridge), Tony Knight (Netherton), Rex Stentiford (Tauhei)

### **Meet the Team**

We continue the profiling of active motorcycle members within the Central North Island, especially as it's such a geographically large area. This time, a warm welcome to Trainee Observer Chris McKinnon from Hamilton and his highly entertaining profile. Chris admits to owning 39 bikes so far in his riding career!!!

My name's Chris McKinnon. Or Topher. You choose.

I was born at a very early age. The trauma of this was mitigated considerably by the discovery I had been born into a family with a long history of motorcycling. As a little boy I was taken to Kindy in front of my Dad on his bike, my older cousins pioneered the use of farm bikes in the 60s using Jawa 175s on their Taranaki hill-country farm and a photo of my Nana on Granddad's 1928 Harley has been scanned to canvas and hangs proudly on the wall in my man-cave/den. (Well, it was my man-cave/den until son 3 came home. Allegedly

temporarily but he's still there. Son 1's back too and son 2 never left). All three of our boys got their motorcycle licences before their car licences – so there are six bikes in the shed at present. What a great problem to have!



**Son #1 learning early**

I learnt to ride on the farm on my Uncle's 1966 Suzuki 80cc K15P Hill Billy. This bike some years later became my first bike, a gift from my Uncle for me to do up, register and ride. Riding on the farm as a kid, and later as part of day to day work (my cousin and I each had a KX250 scrambler as farm bikes, not leaning towards the accepted practice where farm bikes should be ridden so that both wheels remained on the ground) is shown in my current preference for comfortable trail-bike style bikes rather than arse up, head down sports bikes.



**A real farm bike!**

In the late 70's, with two of my cousins, I did my first motorcycle tour. I started in Hamilton, rode to Wanganui to collect Dave then up to Taranaki for Stan to join us. The forgotten highway had barely been discovered then but even though gravel from Strathmore to Ohura, presented no problem to us – Stan on a Z1 900 with an ammo tin top-box, Dave on his Kawasaki 500 Triple (with expansion chambers to make it faster!) and me on my CB500 four. Our riding gear was green plastic raincoats and leggings – forerunners of the yellow raingear still available from the Warehouse – when it was wet and shorts and sandals in the

heat. Still, we had helmets on for safety... We raced on Kaiti Beach in Gisborne, couldn't believe how fast a NZR bus could go through the Waioeka gorge and rode our bikes to the top of Mount Maunganui. Being farm boys we had no problem with a locked gate - only the latch end was locked...



**1972 CB500/4 - top of Mt Maunganui**

Through the eighties and nineties my mates and I went trail riding most weekends – places like Neavesville just south of the Kopu-Hikuai Road. Our bikes were less than registerable – I had mounts as varied as early 70s TM250 and KT250, early 80s IT465 and XR200. Today that kind of ride is called “adventure riding” and costs a small fortune in bike, accessories and gear. We wore overalls and gumboots.



**KT250 up on Neavesville, Coromandel**

Helen retired from competitive Squash a few years back (that competitive aggression still keeps me wary during every waking minute) which means she has weekends free to ride with me now. We've enjoyed many, many weekend rides and longer tours. She's an awesome pillion; not being of a large variety she doesn't weigh the bike down much, though her irrational need to carry a

hair-drier and all kinds of clothing 'just in case' more than undoes the weight saving my choice of a scale model wife gained.

The friends we ride with we've met largely through the Ulysses club – over time we've been to similar skills training and it's just the best feeling to ride with people whose skills you trust and who cover ground smoothly, safely and swiftly. We're hoping others in Waikato Ulysses will take some, (any!) kind of up-skilling too (some things left unmentioned here...)

A couple of years after joining Ulysses, our club started skills training with Andrew Templeton travelling up from Wellington to run a course in the Uni car park– he's still contracted by three local Territorial Authorities to run two courses a year which a few of us enjoy assisting him with. This course showed me I wasn't the outstanding rider I thought I was and started me on an ongoing search for new ways to learn and up-skill. Along with continued involvement with Andrew and the Council funded courses, I've done the California Superbike series of trainings, various track-days and have been the incredibly fortunate beneficiary of Geoff and J.K's knowledge and coaching in IAM.

Distance rides like the C1kC and the 1600km out of Turangi and, more recently, back-road gravel touring provide me with the challenges and a sense of achievement that, perhaps, riding flat-out everywhere used to. The skills and attitude Roadcraft have taught me contribute hugely to being able to achieve these riding goals without ending up knackered and/or broken. Seeing and helping my mates grow in their skills through a similar pathway is immensely gratifying; I'm looking forward to more of them joining IAM along with Goose, Phil McKinnon (a huge relief for us both to have been unable to find any familial connections in the last 8 generations) and, soon, the current Waikato Ulysses Branch coordinator Jim Galt.



Chris today

## **Central North Island Social ride**

Because of the current focus on preparing Associates for the Advanced Test and training Observers, social rides have had a fairly low priority. When we recently contacted CNI members about holding one, those who responded were enthusiastic so one was held on the 20<sup>th</sup> of this month.

We designed a route which was sort of circular because of members coming from all compass points and the need to get home again in a timely manner. However, it was highly technical and a good test of IPSSGA. This is the route for anyone who fancies giving it a go:

<https://goo.gl/maps/AcSWHhstJHF2>

A fantastic day out, great company, good skills on show and a lot of fun. Soon-to-be IAM member Jim Galt from Waikato Ulysses came along on his ST1300 and we really enjoyed his company.

Also bumped into fellow IAM CNI member Chris Smith at the excellent Rhubarb Café, Arapuni. Chris was taking riders out on one of his Passmasters courses. There's no escaping people you know in NZ!



We hope to organise another social run before winter – watch this space! Gentle nudge..... if you want to come along, you have to let us know that you're interested when we email you!

## **Product review corner**

### **Dainese Tempest D-Dry Short Gloves**

(Geoff J)

Until a recent clear-out, I must have had a good dozen pairs of motorcycle gloves in the shed, most of which are well past their use-by date for varying reasons.

Riding a naked bike in all weathers does tend to concentrate one's thoughts about the right tool for the job, or to put it another way; fitness for purpose.

In good weather, my Spidi unlined sport gloves are perfect. On cold winter days, the Gerbing electrically heated gloves are simply wonderful. When there's significant rain about, Rain-Off overmitts totally do the biz although they can be a bit fiddly to get on and off fast and don't look too flash. Can't be beaten on a long, wet ride though.

That left a gap in the glove locker for a waterproof glove that was quick to remove for shorter runs, reasonably stylish, not too bulky but sufficiently warm for all but the coldest weather. A "3 season" glove would be reasonable description.

A massive comparison of gloves on numerous websites followed. Not a straightforward exercise as there appeared to be relatively little correlation between quality/waterproofing and price. Reviews of some ultra-expensive brands were quite damning, either for leaks or poor resistance to wear and tear.

However, the reviews of the Dainese Tempest D-Dry gloves seemed pretty favourable and the price wasn't extortionate. They were also available in long or short cuff which was handy as I'd long wanted some gloves which I could slip under my Gore-Tex jacket in the hope of reducing water trickling inside the gauntlet.



As with most motorcycle clothing, it's significantly more expensive to buy in NZ than overseas so the gloves were ordered from a US-based supplier via eBay. I thought the risk of ordering a wrong size was pretty low and the fit was spot on. So was the price - US\$99 delivered!

The gloves are principally fabric with a reinforced palm and have Comfortech armour in the knuckle area. They comply with CE Cat 2 standard. The fingers are pre-curved for additional comfort. The waterproof membrane is breathable. The gloves also have a rubber visor wiper and "smart touch" capability for users of touch-sensitive GPS devices and the like. My gloves have black reflective trim panels as shown in the photo but the panels are also available in red or yellow.

So what's the verdict? Well, our long dry summer has hardly been conducive to extensive testing but during a couple of 300+ km round trips in moderate rain, they have remained perfectly dry. Being able to tuck them under my jacket sleeves to eliminate trickle-back is also great. Comfort is superb and the pre-curved fingers are a real bonus in that respect. Hands don't seem to get sweaty either. Provided that they remain waterproof, it's a very well specified glove with lots of features for around US\$100 if sourced from overseas. Expect to pay more than that if you buy them in NZ!

### **IAM Conference and AGM, Taupo**

A final reminder that if you intend to come along to the fun-filled weekend at the end of February as detailed in previous newsletters, now is the time to register if you haven't already done so. I'm riding down on the Thursday afternoon and have just had my trackday on the Friday confirmed!

#### **Conference raffle**

I have a book of 100 raffle tickets for some nice motorcycle-related prizes which will be drawn at the conference but you don't have to attend to buy some. They're \$2 per ticket so let me know if you'd like to part with a few bucks to help support conference costs. The social ride attendees have all bought tickets and if anyone else would like some, just email me and we'll sort out payment before the conference.

#### **Newsletter back copies**

Just a reminder that CNI has its own page on the IAM website. Back copies of the newsletter can be found on that page and this is the link:

<http://iam.org.nz/central-north-island/>

**Central North Island contact email**

As CNI Co-ordinator, the official IAM email address is: [cni.iamnz@gmail.com](mailto:cni.iamnz@gmail.com) .

As always, we're looking for suggestions, reviews, questions, feedback or contributions to the newsletter so we'd love to hear from you

Best regards,

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