

# TASMANIAN MOTORCYCLE CLUB



**Newsletter of the Tasmanian Motorcycle Club**

**November 2023**

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Our club year has finished with a very enjoyable Annual dinner and trophy presentation last Saturday night at the Riverside Golf Club. A big congratulations to all trophy recipients. The late Chris McCausland's wife Ruth attended our dinner to award a prize which she has donated to our club as an encouragement award to any rider who is showing potential. This year's recipient was Leigh Stanisz.

The highlight of the night was the awarding of a TMCC Life Membership to Karen Webb. Karen does a massive amount (far more than any one person should have to) of work to keep this club running and to organise our ride/race days. I cannot think in my 50 years as a member of this club a more deserving recipient of Life membership than Karen.

For our last race day of the year we ran a "Bracket Race" meeting. To be honest I wasn't too sure about Bracket racing mainly as I knew nothing about how they actually worked, and to my shame I didn't bother to learn. But as it turned out, it was a very good idea and it worked extremely well. Although we were down on entries, everyone who did come along had a great time, enjoyed their racing and have asked us to do it again next year, so hopefully we will get a few more entries then.

The next big event is the Australian Historic Road Racing Championships at Baskerville, next weekend, the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> November. The event is being run by the SRCT, with their 2 Hour event the following weekend, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> December. So, I'm hoping you all head down and support these meetings.

Cary Mc Mahon

Hon President.

# Bracket Racing

The club ran its first try at Bracket Racing and by the most important gauge the riders who did bother to enter had a great day of racing. Numbers were down a little and a plausible excuse is that riders had so many events to end the year they had to pick and choose. Well, those who chose to pass missed out on a great day's racing that came thick and fast.

A number of new riders fronted for their first even meetings and all I spoke to enjoyed the days racing. Of the longer time racers as usual, Team Renton kept us on our toes with the usual musical bike's routine. This time Trevor was on a Honda CBR900 and allowed Eleanor to ride his Honda VFR400 and I don't think she is keen to give it back as she said it was much better than hers. In fact, she was able to place 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in her class with it, including a few second places. The best performing Renton this time was Leah with a second overall in her class.

The find of the day was Oscar O'Donovan with his 2 meeting old Kawasaki ZX10 winning all 4 races comfortably. He tells me he has a new ZX10 Superbike and is starting to prepare it for next year's Superbike class.

Also, Kawasaki mounted was Ben Abey who usually rides a Suzuki SV650. Unfortunately, he "broke the toy" in practice so the club's Ninja 300 was dragged out of the shed. He fronted the first race from the back of the grid, having never ridden it before, and did an excellent job on it. Another Suzuki rider was looking like he was in for a bad day when they found they had faulty jumper leads to get his race bike started. Eventually Peter Bellchambers was able to wheel the bike out for his last race meeting as Symmons as he retires after the Historics at Baskerville in a few weeks. He did say he would be back as an official next year.

On the historics Jason Spencer was riding his bike the team have built for the event, a Honda CBR400RR, and had to play second fiddle to team member Nathan Tole on his CBR600 but by less than ½ a second a lap. A fellow VFR400 Honda rider is going to have to do a rebuild of the bike he raced a few years ago belonging to Craig Johnson. The reason is, he lost the front end over the hump in Saturday's practice and made the right hand side very ordinary looking.

There were some outstanding performances like Mark Eagling fronting on a Kawasaki ZX636 and doing very well allowing his father Andrew to use the Suzuki SV650 and win his class. A big round of applause was given to Doug Watson who rode a Kawasaki ER650 and after the few years he has been racing, this was the first race he has actually won. Well done Doug!

No photos as I am still working on editing so we may bring you some in the "Santa edition" to end the year.

Ken Young

Couldn't resist adding this photo of a VERY happy Doug Watson after his first ever race win! (Ed-KW)



# Ride Day

As usual the day before a race day is a ride day and this time so soon after the last may have been the reason numbers were slightly down. Again those who did front had a great day and learnt a lot about race craft.

One very interesting part of the day, well for me especially as an ex-sidecar passenger, was the number of sidecars that fronted for the practice day. Five in total. Again, it was Team Renton that kept the spectators guessing. To Start the day Trevor went out with Terry Brooks on this chair.



Following them out was Eleanor on this chair for her first ride in a sidecar that was running in a new motor, so it was meant to be a slow and steady run.





For the end of the day Trevor took over the handlebars and El went out for some “Quick” laps commenting that after the 6 or 7 laps she was struggling to hold on but looking the part of a good passenger.



Ken Young

## Looking Back

This looking back comes from the 1951 Tasmanian Motor Trade Journal and shows how tough motorcycle riders had to be back then. I would imagine now the HR or OHS departments would put a stop to 18 hours on a bike as possibly “slightly” dangerous. I know how much you young riders want to challenge yourselves, like riding in the up-coming 2-Hour, but unfortunately it looks like we can’t let you lose on the roads for an 18-hour navigational rally like the one below.

This column was written under the non de plume “Megaphone” who we all know was Trevor Jowett or more commonly known as just ETH.

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With last Sunday’s Consistency Test over, the next event to hold the interest of Tasmanian motor cyclists will be the T.M.C.C.’s Long-Distance Reliability Trial for 1951, the premier award for which will be the Norm Clarke Trophy.

Norm, or the “Black Prince” as he was known to pre-war T.M.C.C members, doesn’t believe in riders having an easy win and when offering his trophy at the last annual dinner of the Club, he said he wanted it to be hard to win.

With that in mind, the sub-committee appointed to organize the trial, has decided to make it of 18 hours duration, commencing at 6 pm on Saturday, May 26, when the first pair of riders will leave Launceston on the initial stage of the 421 mile journey.

The course will be from Launceston, via Lilydale, to Scottsdale, where a time check will operate, and back to Launceston, via the Sidling. After a 10-minute halt in the city, competitors will leave for the next at Exton and during the 15 minutes’ halt, may re-fuel.

After Exton the next time check will be at Devonport and the next control will be at Wynyard, another re-fueling point.

After 15 minutes at Wynyard, the entry returns to Latrobe, another control and re-fueling point for 15 minutes duration. From there riders travel via Harford, Frankford and Exeter to Launceston to the next

check and then on to Carrick, Bishopsbourne and Green Rises to the Cressy control. Fifteen minutes are allowed there in which to take on more petrol, before leaving, via the hinterland, for Ross and on up the Midland Highway to the breakfast control at Campbell Town, where, in the 50 minutes at their disposal, riders may also re-fuel.

Then comes the short run to Quorn Hall airstrip, where two sub-events will be staged during a one-hour control. From there competitors return via Campbell Town, Conara and the Glen Esk Road to Evandale, where several observed sections will have to be negotiated in the 15 minutes allotted, and finally, all being well the first rider should arrive at the final control just six minutes before midday on Sunday, the 27th.

### **POINTS TO WATCH**

Several points should be borne in mind by intending competitors, among them being the following:

The scheduled road speed is under 30 m.p.h. (ED note aprox. 55 k.m.h.) and each machine taking part must be fitted with an efficient silencer; hence any rider who rides in a dangerous or noisy manner is liable to disqualification, as will any deviation from the course, or the obtaining of outside assistance, even from fellow-riders.

No work may be done on any machine while in a control after the due time of arrival, when the rout card must be handed to the official in charge.

In this trial there will not be a machine examination, as past experience has shown that the time checks, and sub events will prove adequate to decide the winner.

By virtue of its distance, this event will rank high among Australian trials classics in 1951, and club officials hope a bumper entry will be received from enthusiasts throughout the State.

In addition to the N.W. Clarke Trophy for the winner, other awards may soon be forthcoming for the highest-placed sidecar machine, best novice rider and, if the number of entries from other clubs warrant it, for highest places by riders other than members of the promoting club, as well as the customary second and third prizes and team awards.

### **THOUGHTS THAT OCCUR**

We'd like to see representative teams from all clubs. Calling Charlie Vaughan!!! Can you bring a couple of teams from Hobart?

We've seen David Powell in action in the North in every type of event except trials. Why not purloin an ordinary road motor, Dave, such as Andy's Minerva and chair?

Who's going to team with Pat and Denny Brown as a Devonport team, and who, besides, will uphold the honuor of the N.W.M.C.C.? Why not the big, bronzed cane-butcher?

Come on, everyone. It isn't a race, and even if you don't win outright the experience will be something you can "ear-bash" about for years to come. It's got something that no other type of even possesses and you can take that as gospel from someone who hasn't missed a long distance T.M.C.C. trial since 1934.

**Note;** the following month's issue of the TMTJ had this in the column.

### **T.M.C.C. 18-HOUR RELIABILITY TRIAL**

The T.M.C.C. 18-Hour Reliability trial, major Tasmanian classic for the 1950-51 season, proved a trial in every sense of the word, due to prevailing weather conditions, the distance covered (actually 435 miles) and other factors.

For the trophy presented by former Club president, Norm Clarke, now of Exton, 26 riders faced the starter, the first pairs leaving Launceston at 6 pm on Saturday May 26. On the run to Scottsdale, two

riders retired before reaching the check and seven others lost points for time. The return to Launceston saw two more retirements and another four riders lost points for late arrival.

On the next leg of the course, where the control at Exton was operated by the trophy donor, five more riders had withdrawn from the event. On arrival at the next check, at Devonport, shortly before midnight, all those still running were on time, but on reaching Wynyard it was found that two riders had lost further time points.

After re-fueling and a very late (or early) supper, all riders were once again on time at Latrobe. From here the course led, via Harford, Frankford and Exeter, to Launceston, and on this leg, one rider retired with tyre trouble and three others were late.

Via Carrick and Bishopsbourne the next re-fueling point was at Cressy, and here four riders lost points for time, Campbell Town, via Ross, was the next stop, where breakfast was taken and after a short run to "Quorn Hall", where all were on time, those remaining in the event left for the check at Evandale, prior to negotiating the sandy and difficult taped, observed sections. There were three of these, which proved the downfall of many, all remaining competitors losing points in the first two, while in the final section only three riders were able to negotiate them without loss of points. These were Messrs. Vaughan, O'Keefe and Brickhill, Vaughan actually recording by three points, the best performance in the section.

All that remained of the trial was the return trip into Launceston, where the first man was due at 11.54 am on Sunday May 27. With the exception of one new member, whose clutch gave trouble in the sand, all were on time.

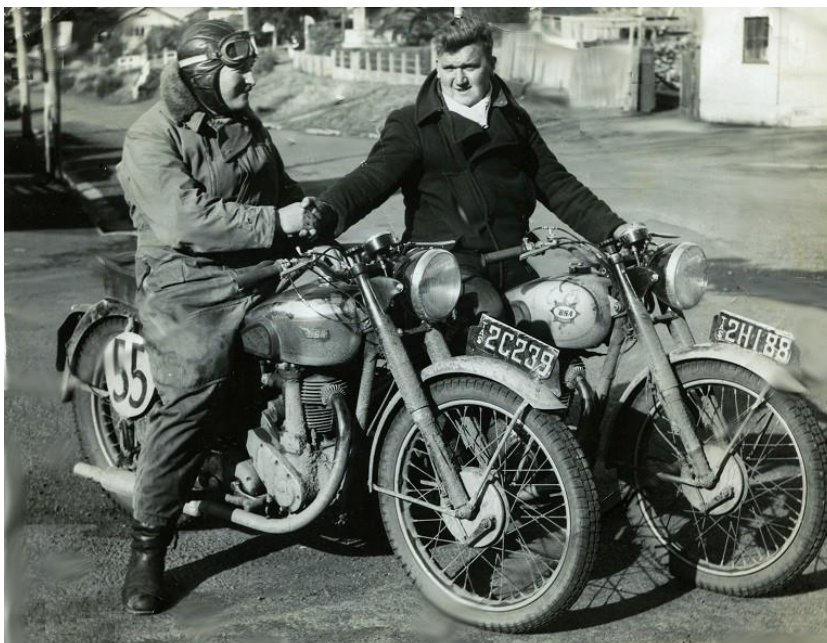
Places were:

J Brickhill, G. O'Keefe (B.S.A.) 1634 points equal 1, D. Perry (A.J.S.) D. Thompson (B.S.A.) 1629 points equal 3, G. White (Matchless), 1621 points 5, N. Windsor, G. Smythe (A.J.S.) 1612, equal 6.

Fifteen riders finished and the team's award was won by the A.M.C. Team – Messrs. Perry, Windsor and B. Clifton – with 3341 points, from the B.S.A. Team – Messrs Brickhill, O'Keefe and O'Donnell – with 3268 points. The Norton Team – A. Hutton, R. Lee and K. Holmes – was in third place.

Trophy winners were. N.W. Clarke Trophy (premier award), J. Brickhill and G. O'Keefe, tied, Merv. Ricketts general class trophy D. Perry. Novice trophy R. Jones.

(Because of the pressure of space, topical comments on the event will appear in the July issue of this journal.)



This is the actual photo from the Journal with # 55 George O'Keefe and John Brickhill congratulating each other on tying for the win on their BSA's

## **A REAL SPORTSMAN**

Without decrying the performance of the winners of the T.M.C.C. 18-Hour Reliability Trial, the highest possible tribute must be paid to veteran Charlie Vaughan, of Hobart. He is not listed among the placegetters, but on time everywhere until he stopped to assist a young rider who suffered tyre trouble miles from anywhere in the wee small hours, he arrived very late at the Launceston check after returning from the N.W. Coast. He then left immediately in an endeavour to make up some of his lost time at the Cressy control. This he failed to do, but there-after, as is his usual habit, he was always early. Even an outstanding performance in the observed section failed to recoup his losses incurred in helping another, which, it is safe to say, lost him the event.

Charlie rode from Hobart just before the trial began and immediately it ended, headed South again wearing his customary cheerful smile.

**Note:** One month later in the TMTJ showing the sense of humour and “in” jokes of the time.

## **TRIALS TOPICALITIES**

Quite a few things happened to make the 1951 18-Hour Trial different from previous long distance events, particularly from individual riders’ viewpoint.

Let no one think it was an easy event – it was not! After the heavy rain which fell prior to the start, we expected unpleasantness and we got it – within five minutes of leaving on the 435 miles journey, The first water splash (by courtesy of the Launceston City Council) just before the foot of Mowbray Hill, made most riders wonder whether the North Esk diversion scheme was already under way.

Surprise retirements on the first leg of the course, Launceston-Lilydale-Scottsdale, were Hughie O’Donnell (cause not ascertained by your roving reporter) and Jack Windsor (damaged rear mudguard), Bad luck blokes.

Those back roads from Lilydale to the North-Eastern metropolis still seem to be a trap for young players at night. The young men took the wrong turnings numbered seven varying from one to twenty-one minutes late. But that can happen to anyone.

Oxley Richards and Ken Holmes certainly found the ideal way to keep nicely warm – an all-in wrestling match during the early stages.

George doesn’t much care for water-splashes (unexpected type) at night. Ask “Brick!”

If you press on regardless, you don’t come home rewardless; at least, that’s what Jonesey and the “Dominator” found out, to the owner’s delight. Ninth place for the first-timer was a real good show.

So was Pete Hodgkinson’s one place higher, when the ground clearance of the ‘K.S.S.’ is taken into account, and particularly in the observed sections chosen to decide the fate of the riders after their long ride.

Apologies to the Norton team as quoted in last month’s issue. The names should have read; A. Hutton, D. Miller and K. Holmes, instead of including Peter Lee’s “Inter”. Not entirely my fault, as the results sheet given to me did not enumerate any teams at all.

Pat on the back for all competitors from N.W.M.C.C. president, Roger Heap, who gave us encouragement by turning out after midnight to pass the friendly wave as we rode through Ulverstone. Roger says the behavior of competitors through the main street of his home town was a model of correctness as regards speed and silence. Thanks, “R.V.”, it’s pleasant to receive a kind word for a change.





Some spectators at Evandale received the impression that the old "E.T.H." did not take a good view of the sections from the "charioteers" angle. How right they were! Veteran Vaughan, although making best solo performance at Evandale, was another who expressed the opinion that sections of that nature should have no place in a long-distance event listed as a "reliability trial" a view he has held for years.

#### Megaphone

Just to give a bit of an idea of what road trials were like back then and not necessarily from that event these are some photos of long distance rallies.

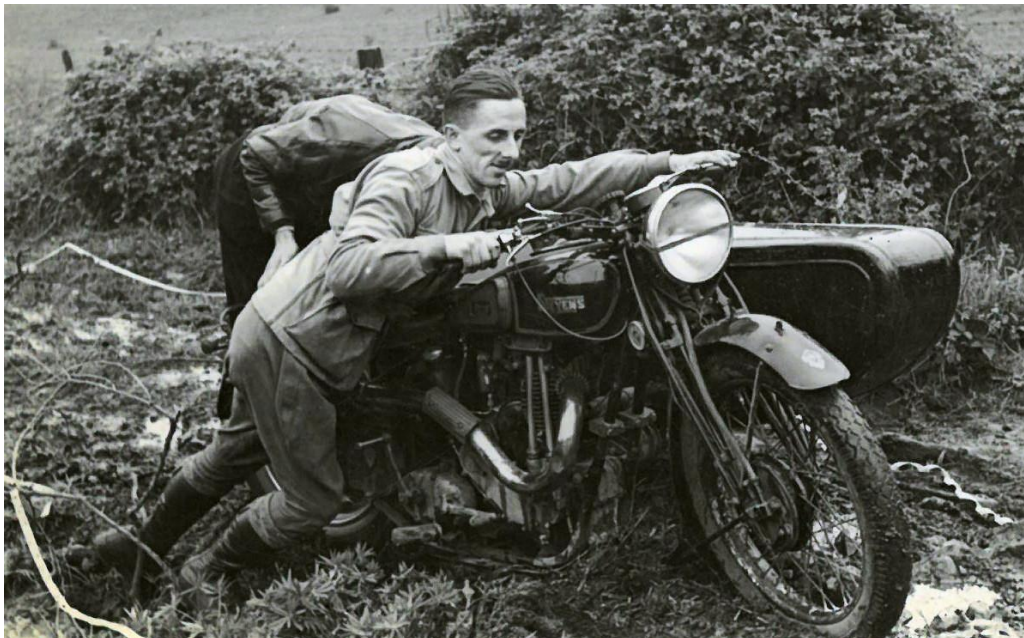
Rallies had many differing starting points like this one outside Anzac House in Paterson St, where the Birchall's car park is now. To the left of the shot (the OUT sign) in the C.O.R. petrol station. That stands for Commonwealth Oil Refineries and a few years later as a rug rat I can remember the big white flying horse emblem of new owners Mobilgas on the brick wall.



This one was captioned "Start 24 Hour Trial outside Anzac House L to R: Graham Clifton, Boyd Clifton, Unknown X2 "Hooks" Hilton Vic Russell, Alan Beecroft, Geoff Quon, Anthea White, Mrs White and TMCC Pres Bert Cobern."

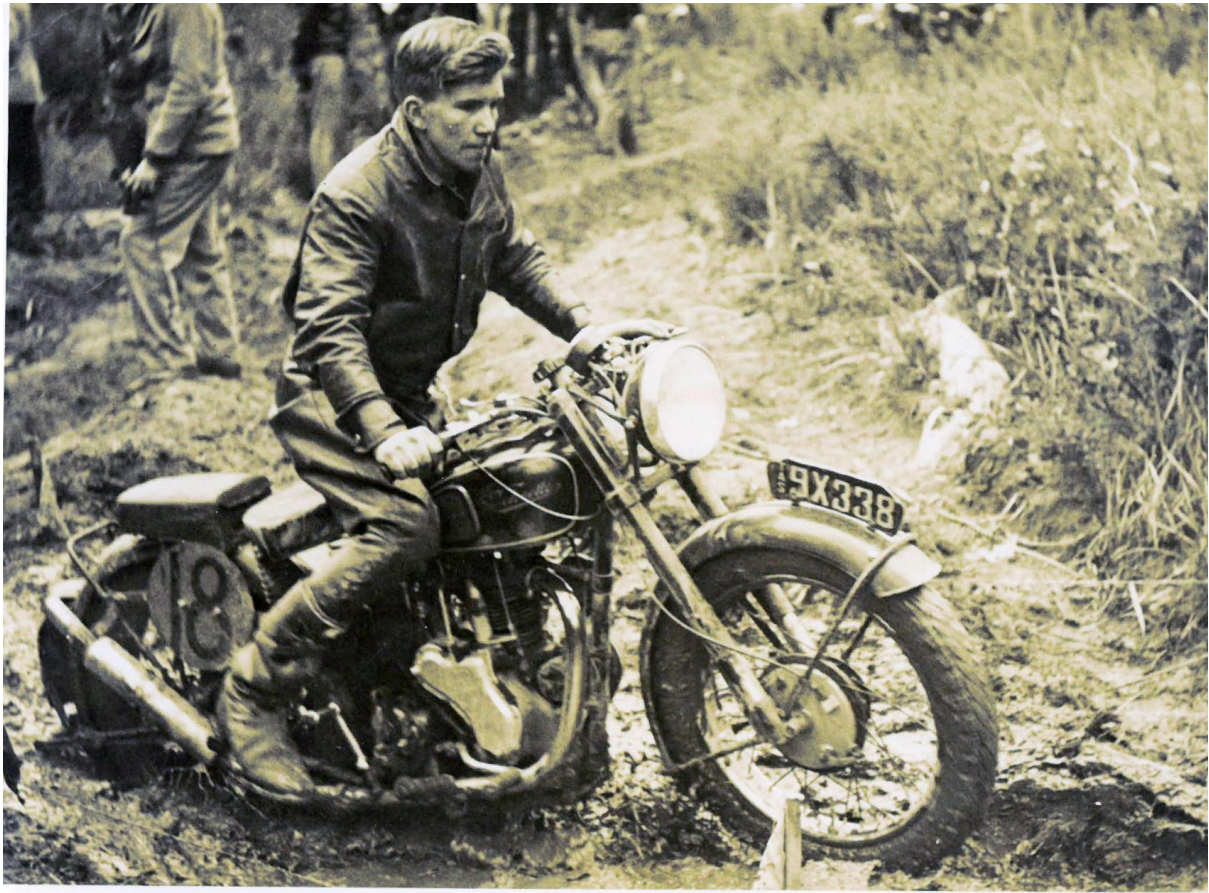


This one was captioned "12 Hour trial break Branhholm? Peter Henry, Graham White, Noel Windsor. Rear Jake Smythe, ?, Jack Windsor Geoff Rowell, Donny Miller Hilton Houston etc."



Trevor Jowett aka Megaphone, recording some more memories from competing in trials. The observed section saw a rider clean sheet if he could complete the section without putting a foot down. In this situation along with his passenger he is trying to just get out of the section.





Solo rider Donny Miller trying to complete an observed section without putting the foot down. Remember it is in the middle of winter on a rough bush track.

Ken Young

# AMCN

We don't usually do promotions for the two best magazines in Australia, Australian Motor Cycle News and Old Bike Australasia, but this time is special. AMCN issue out from November 13<sup>th</sup> for two weeks has a special story in it. Your humble scribe wrote a story a few months ago and suggested it would be a good story to coincide with Remembrance Day on Nov 11<sup>th</sup>.

It is a story about some of our club members who went away in the two wars that have been recorded and I thought should be told. The start of November saw an email land from AMCN saying they are going to run with the story. It is a chance for you all to learn more about the history of the club and some of its members. The magazines do know how many copies are sold in each area and if there is a spike in sales in Tasmania for this issue they would look favorably on more stories coming out of Tasmania.



This is the cover with a photo and head line to the 6 page story that is my first feature story with AMCN and I am very pleased with the result and I hope it gives some knowledge to all our club members about our history. It also is a chance to use some of the many photos I have been able to collect over the last few years on our history.

This issue also has a small report and a few photos from the final round of the TRRC from Baskerville.

Ken Young



## Coming up

We are in for a busy time so you all need to keep an eye on the calendar for the remainder of the year.

24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> November is the Historics at Baskerville

1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> December is the 2-Hour at Baskerville

10<sup>th</sup> December – TMCC Ride Day at Symmons CANCELLED

17<sup>th</sup> December is the SRCT Ride Day at Baskerville

That should keep us going up to Christmas.

Ken Young

## Web Site

We are still looking for historical information in relation to Life Members, Trophy winners and Committee members. We are also after TMCC minute books that may have some of this information in them. If you have or know the location of any minute books, please let the club know by email to [tmccsec@gmail.com](mailto:tmccsec@gmail.com), or post on Facebook. The lists can be viewed on the TMCC website at [<<Here>>](#)

Ken Young

## WOT'S ON

**TMCC Committee Meeting  
Thursday 7th December 2023**



**TMCC need members to step up and get involved in the committee and running of the Club.**

**Gunners Arms Hotel, Lawrence Street, Launceston  
7pm start**

**The next TMCC Ride Day on 10<sup>th</sup> December has been  
CANCELLED**

2023 ROAD RACING CALENDAR - SELECTED EVENTS					
Start	Finish	Days	Meeting Name	Round	Location
23/11/2023	26/11/2023	4	SRCT - AHRRC		Baskerville
1/12/2023	3/12/2023	3	miBike Motorcycle Insurance Australian Superbike Championship presented by Motul	7	The Bend
1/12/2023	3/12/2023	3	SRCT - 2 Hour		Baskerville
<b>10/12/2023</b>	<b>10/12/2023</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>TMCC Ride Day - CANCELLED</b>		<b>Symmons Plains</b>
17/12/2023	17/12/2023	1	SRCT Ride Day		Baskerville
29/12/2023	31/12/2023	1	South Australian Historic Road Race Championships		Mac Park

### ***Numbers – Background, Colour and Size***

Just in case you couldn't find it in the Manual of Motorsport, here's the [link](#)  
[If you need to update your numbers and can't get them locally, Mototrack Accessories have the right size and colour. Visit their website <<here>>.](#)

## **FOR SALE or WANTED**

This service is available free to members. Just email your advert/wanted to [tmccmag@gmail.com](mailto:tmccmag@gmail.com) (with a photo if you have one) and it will appear in the next available issue of SPOKE.

### **WANTED – Dead or Alive**

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