



Stewards News & Views

VOLUME 3

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Well, bet you thought it wasn't going to happen again, ha he won't to any more of those newsletters, well guess again because here we are with Stewards News & Views Volume 3.

So where are we with what's happening? First up let's get the bad news over and done with; where are the Stewards Reports? As I sit here I contemplate a list and I see Southland: 1, Auckland: 2, Taranaki: 3 now 4, Maungaturoto: 2, Huntly: 4 - come on Sandra you have been to a seminar you know how important these reports are to us, Martinborough: 5, hey I am a Wairarapa born and bred guy, Greytown in fact so I know how good the Wairarapa people are and I'm sure you can do better than that, Pukekohe: 1, Rodney: 2, Te Awamutu: 2. Now these reports are really important to us, with the problems we face with Govt Depts, Local bodies and general do gooders and greenies etc. It is imperative that we have reliable statistics to throw at these people to prove that what we say is in fact true. Our President quotes the fact that in Wellington, the home of Govt Depts there are buildings with 6 floors full of people who are studying news reports, papers etc with a view of, among other things, seeing what's happening out there in our, and others world's. If you were a cynic you could say that they are looking for ways and means to put us out of business, cynical but not too far from the truth. Now we have a guy from our organisation in there at the top levels presenting our views, which are or were quite different from theirs. Is he effective, yes certainly, a number of bureaucratic repressive proposals aimed at making our life miserable have been ditched, and how does Stewards Reports affect this I hear you say, because to gain those objectives that Paul has been able to gain, has been partly improved by being able to present accurate statistics to prove that we do what we do, because we love our sport, and we can do it in relative safety and limited serious injury, keeping in mind that our sport is a dangerous one.

OK, that's the first one, so now;

Helmet Checks, every event, every time. They will be done, no excuses. If you have big fields or you figure you can't do it on your own get someone to help you. There are a lot of helmets out there that don't have standard markings, look at Fox Chinese v1, v2 & v3 as examples. If you do not check helmets and someone dies or is seriously incapacitated as a result of head injuries you will be in the gun, first up, your responsibility regardless of the circumstance of the accident. So cover your bum, check helmets, see section 8 in your rulebook. Helmet checks are mandatory anyway but I know that they have been neglected over time, some clubs haven't done them for five years or so, and yes I



know it's a pain in the posterior but it is in the rulebook and we have to live by the book as Stewards. Just so you know, we are looking at changing the rules to put helmets in the same category as machines covered by the disclaimer, aren't we Sandy.

Next is the day glow vest thing, no they haven't been put in the too hard basket and yes we do know that there are a lot of you without them, so what's happening. We are currently looking at ways to raise the ever expanding problem of how to pay for them. It's a curious thing but back when Marie and I were involved with the ACU then MNZ we did not think about how the organisation funded itself. We always thought, if it ever occurred to us, that with all those riders out there paying MNZ for licences and or whatever, that the money was not something to be worried about. Was I ever wrong, it costs a fair bit to run our organisation, something I am still learning about. So anything that was put on the back burner, when Stewards needs or requirements were not as important to the organisation as some other things; and that included our vests or better, raincoats if you Steward in the South; and those items were not pursued as they perhaps should have been. Yes I am trying to be diplomatic here and not tread on anyone's toes, but it does seem to me that a Stewards requirements have not been near the top of the list until recently. I am doing my best to resolve that situation as best I can as I go along.

I have been fortunate enough to be involved with the new Officials Training Seminars that we have had around the country over the last 3 or 4 months, Jim Tuckerman and I along with Paul Searancke, when he's been available have been out and about presenting these seminars which are all about officials and the way they should interact at and prior to events. They are about introducing a new Warranted Official into our ranks, that of Clerk of the Course. I can hear it now; "we have always had a Clerk of the Course" so what's new. Sorry, in most cases you have had someone who was called a Clerk of Course but he in most cases did not know what he should be doing, what the job was and in most cases the Steward did most of the Clerk of Course job anyway. But, observe rule 3.2 and 3.2.1. We do not run the meeting, yes I know the popular belief that we are in control of the meeting and insofar as safety and conduct of the meeting this is correct, and that we have the final say as to whether the meeting should or should not proceed because of safety concerns or because of conduct concerns, but we do not run the meeting. We do not get involved with the administration of the meeting except where the administration concerns us such as sign in, licence inspection and those areas immediately prior to the running of the meeting. Those jobs such as licence checking and helmet checks and the dreaded one event licence can be effectively carried out by the administration of the event under your observation but, we do not run the meeting. I have been responsible for closing down a meeting, twice actually for weather concerns, both Island Champs, it's a little difficult to guarantee safety when its snowing that hard you cant see the top of the track, but I would never insult the organisation by not consulting the Clerk of Course in the first instance, and advising the riders rep of proceedings before the act as it were, good manners alone dictate that course of action. I have and will point out places of concern to me to the Clerk of Course that may be a possible safety hazard and request that they be attended to, I have and will suggest to the riders rep that a particular rider is behaving in a manner not conducive to the conduct of the meeting. I have and will brief Mini parents and caregivers on the conduct that I expect to see on the track or in the pits and I will do what I say I will about it if necessary, I do not expect you to act over much different than what I have described and I am will aware that most of you are of a like mind to what I have said here. Yes, I know that there are situations where diplomacy is not enough and you have to get tough, I have



disqualified a rider for blatant rule breaking knowing full well that the disqualification will blow his teams championship chance but as they say, them's the breaks and under similar circumstance I would do it again. I am a MNZ Steward and I am proud of that and I will do the best job I can both for the rider and for the organisation. I do not expect anyone to do less.

As I said before I have been able to get around the country and visit Districts and I have met some lovely people out there. We have been able to welcome some more Stewards into the fold and to see some others upgraded. We have seen people embracing the idea of becoming a warranted Clerk of Course, sitting tests and getting into it. I have been able to talk with many other Stewards and resolve some problems that they have had. I have been so impressed by the dedication of people to become involved in what is probably a thankless task at the best of times, but people want to get involved and that is so cool. We went to Southland first because Linley got on my case at the AGM so the squeaky wheel gets the oil and that's where we went. Now our full presentation takes about 3-4 hours not counting any test papers so we were not too sure how we would be accepted. Well, Steve picked us up and took us about, took us out to the clubrooms and generally looked after us very well indeed, and we were not back to our Motel until well into the evening, and it was about that stage that I learnt our esteemed Pressy carries a bottle of bourbon in his essential survival kit. So next day Buddha carts us around in his van which was ok but Paul and I had to share the back with one of Buddha's motorbikes. That's cool, we were able to wander around Hayes Hardware and look all the old bikes and Burt Munro's fastest Indian. Choice. Many thanks guys and girl(s), combine business with pleasure and you can't go wrong. Next up was Palmerston North which, as you know is the venue for next years AGM to celebrate their 100 I think. Well you know bike riders don't celebrate unless the bar is open at least till after 10pm, so the Hotel that was going to be the venue is not now and we are going to a hotel who's bar is open after 10pm. Jim was most put out on being told that the bar was closed at 10pm on a Saturday night and the house bar was not open either. Not good for a couple of hundred thirsty bike riders in 2011 I suspect. We were well treated at Palmerston North and once again I was rapt to see people who are involved because they want to. Bloody marvellous, we were squired around by our renowned commentator Neil Ritchie and did our thing in their clubrooms and again looked after so well by Carmen and Neil's wife, lovely people. What is it about our sport that attracts so many dedicated hardworking people both in Stewarding and general running of it.

Jim did Wellington later in the month and I missed that one because of an event I think but it went well too.

Hamilton and again, so many people who are into our sport that it is so hard to comprehend, more new Stewards and more upgrades and more Clerk of Course test. We had the opportunity to visit Huntly Motocross in action, Seniors, Juniors & Mini's, Sandra, do you always wear a helmet when you are getting about on the quad or was it because we were there. No matter, thanks for the experience.

We visited Marlborough and Nelson as a group and again a successful visit apart from a broken window in our van. It is so good to meet people that I have heard from on a phone or an email. Watch the website to see where we are at next and make an effort to get to the seminars, for some of you it will be necessary to attend.



Change for the sake of change, no, I have found in my travels that a lot of Stewards are not happy with the way things are, there appears to be an erosion of responsibility for a Steward these days, a lack of recognition even, after all what on earth is a Regional Coordinator?

OK here's what will happen from the first of December.

All Regional Coordinators will be known as District Stewards and should where possible be Grade 3 or Grade 4. All other G3 & G4 Stewards in that District will be known as Senior Steward 3 or 4 as applies. Progression will be by sitting a G3 test to progress from 2 to 3 then by assessment by higher graded Steward.

G3 and G4 may be requested by the District Steward to cover G1 & G2 training.

Any G3 & G4 Steward may be requested by mutual consent, to officiate at Major Events, by the Commissioner or MNZ as required. All G3 and G4 Stewards will mentor and assist G1 and G2 as applicable.

G1 and G2 Stewards will be basic Stewards and known as Basic G1 or G2 as applies. They will become a G1 by sitting a G2 test then progressing from 1 to 2 by assessment by a higher graded Steward. The District Steward will be responsible for all G1 and G2 training but may appoint by mutual consent a Senior Steward to do that training. As soon as we can set up the required programming all permit applications will be electronic, approved by the District Steward along with Entry Forms and Supplementary Regulations. Raising the permit application by the club will flag an entry on MNZ's computer so that in the event of any delay that application can be tracked to where the hold up will be. When this system comes into place District Stewards will need to be computer literate or appoint a Senior Steward to cover that job. That's my lot till next time.

Cheers, Del.