

SQTA MARCH 8 EVENT REPORT

We held our first official event of 2015 over the weekend and if there were still any lingering doubts about kicking our season off in March instead of the traditional ingrained February commencements then they were dispelled as, "Oh what a difference a month makes" temperature wise. That said, and although it was a perfect early Autumn weekend, there was still enough humidity around to open the pores after only small amounts of exertion but with a four month hiatus between drinks I think everyone was ready and rearing to go judging by the 57 attendees that finally signed up for the day.

We gave the opening event of 2015 to our northern NSW brethren this year and in so doing they chose the ever popular Toonumbar Dam property, 30mins west of Kyogle, and the likes of Les, Michael, Ian Duley & Paul Moore deserve a round of applause for setting an excellent loop of 10 All Division Sections over two days without any other help. Mind you I think Les & Michael like working in isolation, as they did together on Friday, but regardless, it is to be hoped that the Soiree attendances increase, not only for the next three events south of the border, but also for the remaining six north of the border this year! Remember, a happy committee is a happy club so don't drop the ball fellow members, nor kill the goose that lay the golden egg for that matter, if you get my drift?

Anyway, back to the weekend's event. Toonumbar is renowned for its pristine rainforest environment and with the recent heavy rain cleaning the creeks out it was well and truly in prime condition for us over the weekend. Mind you the slime on the rocks reflected how long it had been since we last visited which had a few of those who were in the know putting the kettle on after the gun was fired on Sunday morning to let the unsuspecting clear things up before starting their laps. Good decision too I might add as pretty much every section bar one were set in the creeks. The first three were in the main creek, about 1km down from the Park Ferme, with a short traverse up the hill to the other seven set either side of the upper trail. This helped spread them out but also made for a nice diverse offering not to mention a bit of a trail ride in between. The environment never ceases to amaze us every time we visit and we are blessed to be the sole recipients of this premier property, even more so when you consider that the owners, NSW State Water Authority, bend over backwards to keep getting us back. I think we must have all died and gone to Trials Heaven!

It was great to see our smiling Observers back and refreshed and ready to go for our seventh season and there were 6 of them all up scattered around the loop this weekend leaving only 4 untended Sections requiring the riders to do their bit on. I think the ride up & down the track on the back of the ute was their real excitement for the day as opposed to marking the unwashed but once again we, the unwashed, are not worthy to have your undying devotion to making our events that much more enjoyable by your presence. I know I've said it all before but it can never be said enough that you contribute greatly toward making us the unqualified success we all collectively benefit from.

This year the decision was made to post our Calendar on Trials Australia, on the pretext that we surely must have completed our 6 year probationary period by now, and as a result the phones and emails have run hot over the past three or so weeks with over two dozen enquires from people wanting a piece of our action. Well, as is usually the case, not all enquiries make it thru to the main game but that said we still managed over a dozen new and used non-members making the effort to get to this event and pretty safe to say that none were disappointed by their decision. We had a good contingent of six attendees from as far afield as Coffs Harbour too I was pleased to see, including Mr Bucca himself, Peter Foote, giving us another go and once again offering us his venue for any future events. Thanks Pete, we fully intend on taking you up on your offer but only when we can find a place to slip it into our jamb packed calendar.

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"The Innovator's, not the Imitator's"

It was particularly good to see our long-time friend Rita Fields (Jack's Mum) wandering around the venue on Sunday accompanying her nephew and his son, 5 year old Elijah, competing on his little electric trials bike for the first time ever. He's a bit of a legend already I'm led to believe riding in some of Jack's freestyle shows, so I'll venture to predict there may be a champion in the making, who started his trials career with SQTA too. It was particularly pleasing to see quite a few other Juniors riding with us for the first time and riding their first trials event, such as Cooper McKinnon and Kelsey Gomersall, who both did themselves proud and a trend I hope will continue long into the future as we need more kids, both boys and girls, to ensure our sports longevity. A couple of other rising stars that we are justly proud to say started their careers with SQTA, and need to be watched, are Isaac Somerville, already making his presence felt in Div Zero and Dean Collins from Coffs who isn't far behind Isaac already making it up into Div 1 with a bullet. Just goes to prove what the benefit of practice, practice and more practice can do, not to mention youth, something the majority of riders of my era can only vaguely remember unfortunately.

One minor glitch on the day was that I, yours truly, with too much other stuff on my mind to remember everything, forgot the Score Card Box resulting in a bit of chaos in regard to score tallying, not to mention the cards themselves not being moisture resistant, which resulted in many a lost card on the track. Score tallying is the biggest thorn in my posterior and a reason we reverted back to the Dark Ages but one thing it sure confirmed was how brilliant our Tablets were even when they were having the odd hiccup. It's obvious that I'm still not a lover of the card system and I have every confidence that the tablets shall return once our coffers are full enough to afford another 10 of them, or we can convince Samsung or Apple to sponsor us, but until then, we will just have to go low tech. That said, it is also high time for every rider to start to address his or her time management skills in regard to getting Sections/Laps completed in a timely manner and something we are going to start to address in the very near future so watch this space for some changes afoot.

Lastly, I am once again posting the results with much trepidation and preparing myself for the usual influx of emails to tell me that some final scores were nothing like what they actually were on the day but don't waste chipping a finger nail as we are blatantly aware that there are and will be some anomalies and will do our best to rectify the issues next event. The ones with no score & a DNF next to their names didn't hand their cards in at the end of the day we can only assume.

Aside from all that, it was a top weekend and a great way to start 2015. There were over 15 sets of campers on Saturday night, amounting to over 20 individuals taking advantage of the full weekend package, and apart from the mozzies making a bit of a nuisance of themselves I didn't hear too many complaints aside from myself. We finished off with a superb sausage and rissole BBQ devoured during result reading before everyone dispersed to all points of the compass and varying degrees of distance all looking forward to getting home and a well-earned sleep.



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