



DESMOTO

THE MAGAZINE OF THE DUCATI OWNERS CLUB OF VICTORIA

OCTOBER
2026

DUCATI
OWNERS CLUB
VICTORIA

50
YEARS
STRONG



NEXT SOCIAL MEETING

Tuesday 20 October at The Manningham

Please register on the club website www.docv.org

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Like to contribute to Desmoto?

It's easy – just email the Editor with your article or photos or whatever you think other DOCV members would be interested in. Photos are best sent in .jpg format separate of the article (ie. don't embed them in the Word doc). Bigger pics are better than small ones. All contributions will be very gratefully received.

The email address for the Desmoto editor is:
editor@docv.org

The deadline for Desmoto is always the last day of the month, except for December because we don't publish a January edition.

NEXT SOCIAL MEETING

- Tuesday 20 October,
The Manningham (Pavilion Room)
- 6:30pm socialising, 8:00pm meeting
- Guest speaker: Fab Ramunni - Hispania
motorcycle tours, Europe & Morocco
- Red emergency cards handed out on the
night

"Please register on the club website"

Cover: Captain Chris Williams in the Alps
Back page: Ducati singles by Russ.

Ducati Owners Club of Victoria Inc.

PO Box 16 Box Hill Victoria 3128

Incorporated Association Registration #A80B

DOCV Committee Members and Office Bearers

President / Merchandise	Vice President / Membership	Secretary	Treasurer	Club Captain	Desmoto Editor	Spares / Club Permits
						
Neil Larson	Tom Hinton	Geraint Gardner	Mark Dulfer	Chris Williams	Matt Rubenstein	Daryl Grant
All club matters	Membership, stands in for Pres	Meeting minutes, official documents	Payments, accounts and advertising	Rides and Fun Days	Desmoto	Spares, tools and advice
pres@docv.org	vicepres@docv.org	sec@docv.org	treas@docv.org	captain@docv.org	editor@docv.org	spares@docv.org

Co-captains: Garry Elphinstone, Geoff Salmon, Evan Rubenstein, Daryl Grant,
John Lyon, Neil Larson, Glenn Loechel and Peter Shearman

Library: *Garry Elphinstone* librarian@docv.org

Life Members: Garry Elphinstone, Ric Begg (dec), Peter Shearman, Gerard Porter, Gary Parnaby, Lawrence Lloyd, Peter Sack, Stephen Frew, Ralph Green (dec), John Slater, Russ Murray, Neil Larson.

General Meeting and Social Night held at:

The Pavillion Room,
The Manningham,
1 Thompsons Road Bulleen.

Third Tuesday of every month (except Jan):

7.00pm - social catch up and grab a bite to eat; 8.00pm - meeting starts.

Disclaimer: Technical articles and comments printed in this magazine are the result of contributions from members. As such, the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Ducati Owners Club of Victoria Inc. (DOCV) The material contained in this magazine is in the nature of general comment only, and is not advice on any particular matter. The DOCV editorship and contributing authors do not accept any responsibility for the consequences of any action taken, or omitted to be taken, by any person whether as a member or not, as a consequence of anything contained in, or omitted from, this magazine. Itinerary dates and times are subject to last minute variation.

Magazine assembly by Peter Cusworth, Ph 0409 797 023 pcusworth53@gmail.com

Front cover: World Ducati Week 2026. How good would it be to ride the Misano track!?

editoriale

Matt Rubenstein

Ciao Regazzi,



Daylight saving is back, the mornings are warming up and the bikes are coming out of hibernation. Welcome to the start of the riding season.

This month's Desmoto theme is about Euro Tours, on the back of many of us being away over some of winter. Captain Chris leads off with nine days of Swiss and French passes on a MotoVibes tour, including a stop at a nearly 1,000-year-old brewery.

Dad and I spent eight days in the French Alps experiencing incredible roads, views, pastries and wine.

Closer to home, Secretary Geraint has written a serious piece on Victoria's potholes and what we can do about them as a club..Tom explains why your X-ring chain still needs lube, our resident financial analyst digs into whether VW is really selling Ducati, and there are some MotoGP podcasts for the commute.

October is Motorcyclist Awareness Month: share the road, keep everyone safe. I'll be handing out red emergency cards at the social meeting, so grab one for your jacket. The online store has had a refresh, and a big welcome to new members Owen, Marc, Chris and John.

Next social meeting is Tuesday 20 October at The Manningham. Long-time member Fab Ramunni will talk European touring and Hispania tours and I've put a call out for interest in a private tour in a years time - looking for any interested members.

If this issue has you fantasizing about a Euro trip, don't miss it. Also, Evan will be presenting in November about the Tour de French Alps.

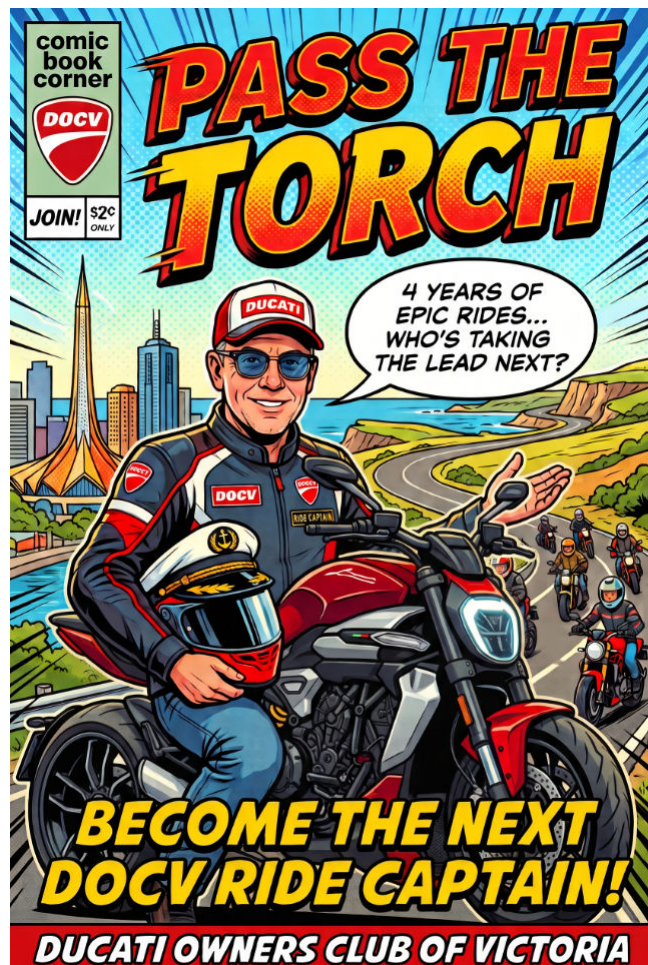
Other updates: Joe Rascal Ducati has launched an Events page on its website and has free pit garages for Ducati owners at the Phillip Island ride day on 13 October. Neil has put together a lunch ride to the Neerim South Pub on Sunday 18 October, and Chris's Melbourne Cup weekend tour heads west to Ballarat and Warrnambool from 31 October to 2 November. Get your name down and book accommodation now. Reminder that the Dargo weekend is only a few weeks away....

Reminder, this is your magazine. Ride reports, tech tips, photos, a bike for sale, a rant: send it all to editor@docv.org, November, December and beyond is all about summer riding, see you in the twisties!

Grazie

Matteo

Lastly, a call for members to step up for the Captain and Secretary roles. Chris is stepping down after four years, so if you like the idea of always riding at the front of the pack, now is your moment.



president's report Neil Larson



Hi everyone,

Riding season is here! I haven't been out on the bike for over 2 months – awful weather here north of the ranges, and spending 4 weeks travelling in central Australia are the main reasons. But this warm early spring weather has made me crave the next ride – so I've put up a ride on the 'Events' page of the website – feel free to join me for an easy run through Powelltown to Neerim South Hotel for lunch.

Coming up is one of the club's most iconic rides – Dargo! If you haven't been on this weekend ride before then you're missing out on some great roads and warm camaraderie, and a terrific night at the welcoming Dargo Hotel. The route and stops are always interesting, thanks to seasoned ride leader Glenn Lochel. This ride, and the Dargo Road are in my top 5. We'll also have a special 1980's quiz and award at the hotel on Saturday night, so don't miss it! Again, check the Events page for details and registration.

Captain Chris is OS on the bucket list trip of a lifetime, but when he's back we'll have The Melbourne Cup weekend ride, really looking forward to that one. Fingers crossed it's mild in Ballarat and Warrnambool. Kudos to Chris for mixing it up with some different routes.

Although the roads are good, and with two days you can really relax, one of the best things about overnight rides is the company – spending real time with your fellow club members.

I like to share a room to reduce cost, but also to get to know fellow club members better. Real human connection is a good thing in this super-connected but often impersonal world.

If you're anxious about joining a club ride because you think you may not ride quickly enough, don't worry, it seriously is not an issue. I am often the slowest rider in the group, which is not a problem, a good Tail-End-Charlie is unconcerned about speed. The reason I mention this is that I'd love some company at the back of the bunch! So if you've been thinking about doing an overnight ride, or a day ride, but are worried that the group might leave you behind, feel free to join me at the back ;)



We'll soon fill in the ride calendar for Spring and Summer. Check the website as the details are filled in. It's going to be a great season of riding!

What your committee is up to:

Your committee has been working behind the scenes to keep the club machine purring:

The IT subcommittee (Mark Dulfer, Louis Putter and Mark Evans) is researching data and web backup, and will have a data management policy soon. We care about your member data, and we want to ensure it is adequately protected.

Treasurer Mark is developing a running monthly budget so we can report actuals vs budget, and plan our finances more effectively.

We're starting to look at items for the 2027 member pack. The neckwarmer and caps were well received.

Until then you can always design your own DOCV merch through our online store – we now have a tab on the main menu – **see above:**



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Desmoto

Editor Matt has shaken things up from the get-go (love the new cover design!) but he does need stuff to put in the magazine. It's not his job to write stuff, it's ours! I know club members are always tinkering, buying new gear, riding new roads, so just take a few minutes to send something to Matt at editor@docv.org

Even if you've just seen a cool YouTube video or listened to a good podcast, let Matt know. I'm always keen for tips, and I know other club members are too.

Note: remember that the full-fruit Desmoto only comes out each alternate month – in between we have the Desmoto e-Newsletter which is there to keep you up to date with time critical news and coming events.

What we'll be doing in the next few months:

Tapping a few members on the shoulders to ask if they are interested in the Club Captain or Secretary roles: Chris has decided to step down after 4 stellar years leading rides to all parts of the state and beyond. Huge thanks to Chris for providing so many good roads and great times! And Secretary Geraint has been overloaded with work and family life, so he's been under the pump lately. If you're a person who likes organising stuff and making things happen in a group environment then both positions could be for you.

Remember that our club needs a committee running at 7,000 rpm, not at idle, so please consider putting something back into a club that's (hopefully) given you so much.

As always, if you have any questions, feedback or anything you'd like to raise, hit me at pres@docv.org

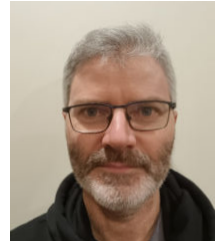
Hope to see you on a ride or at a meeting soon!

Ciao,

Neil

treasurer's report

Mark Dulfer



Monthly Financials for September 2026

By Mark Dulfer

September 2026 August 2026

Income

Desmoto		
Events		164.77
Memberships	144.74	181.16
Merchandise		
Other		0.03
	144.74	345.96

Expenses

Cost of Sales		
Desmoto		702.00
Events		597.70
Membership		
Other	274.07	1,619.56
Total Expenses		2,919.26
Operating Profit/(Loss)	144.74	(2,573.30)

Cheque Account	3,775.85	3,775.85
Paypal	2,515.86	2,474.96
Debit Card	1,267.79	1,438.02
Cash reserve/Contingency	18,462.67	18,462.67
Term Deposit 2 /DOC	16,861.12	16,861.12
Term Deposit 3 /50th Ann	17,041.71	17,041.71
Trade Debtors		
Other Assets	3,745.55	3,745.55
Net Assets	63,670.55	63,799.88

ilrappoto del capitano Chris Williams



Bonjour, Bongiorno and Ciao DOCV. Finally back in the southern hemisphere and what a rude awakening. After nearly 7 weeks of 30+ degree weather days we arrive back to classic Melbourne weather. Rainy 17 degrees 🌧️. Classic.

Well this report is all about me. I have had just the best time. Having never been to Europe before it was amazing and I opened with a 2 week tour of the Swiss and French alps on an R1300 GS. Magnificent. Followed by 4 weeks touring Italy and France with my wife. I signed up for this tour a bit over a year ago. Having discovered an organisation called 'MotoVibes' of which I highly recommend. Well organised and expert knowledge of not only the Swiss and French alps but also Spanish and Portuguese mountains, the Balkans, the Dolomites, Corsica and Sardinia. Even a tour up Norway is on the books. Run by professional tour guide Oliver Schwabe he has teamed up with motorcycle rental company 'Adventure Motorcycle Rentals' in Hamburg.

(Adventure Motorcycle Rentals) Owner Stefan has over 140 brand new BMW and KTM motorcycles with variants from 800cc to 1300cc. They also rent out complete motorcycle riding gear from helmets to suits, gloves and boots.

Even airbag vests.

Oliver organised everything for me. All I had to do was just turn up.

The accommodation, routes, mountain passes (of which there were many) breakfast and dinners were all organised by Oliver. It was so nice just to sit back and let it all unfold in front of me. We all were outfitted with SatNav and all maps logged in. Cardo communication systems kept us all in communication with each other for the entire trip.

So relaxed was the organisation by Oliver he even allowed me to lead on a few occasions. It was truly one of the

best things I have ever done in my life. The mountainous scenery mixed in with centuries old architecture and roads that just snaked their way through valleys and then climbed up through incredible heights of rock and vegetation. We were all just in awe of what we were witnessing each and every day.

With each day there were cries of "Wow. Look at that". "OMG Check this out".

Covering some of the greatest passes of the alps our tour went like this ... and No. Stelvio was not on the itinerary.

Actually day 1 was an introduction into the team and our bikes. That was followed by a dinner that night to get to know each other. Before dinner we went for a wander through the township of Freising, where the tour would start. We stumbled into a festival being held by 'Weihestephan' the oldest continuously operating brewery in the world, brewing on the Weihestephan hill in Freising, Germany, since 1040. Founded as a Benedictine monastery brewery, it has nearly a thousand years of brewing tradition and they hold a festival every September purposefully avoiding Oktoberfest to offer some of their finest brews. As most of you know I don't drink beer so I joined in with a nice glass of Aperol spritz 😊

The next day we hit road, actually the autobahn. And rode it autobahn style. 😊

Day 1 (311 km): Munich to Altdorf

Our Alpine adventure began in Munich as we set off towards Switzerland. We covered a long stretch of motorway, making good progress south before passing through the region south of Vaduz. As we approached the Alps, the roads became narrower, more winding, and increasingly scenic.

The highlight of the day was to be the legendary Klausenpass, one of Switzerland's most spectacular



mountain passes. With its endless switchbacks, dramatic alpine scenery, and beautiful mountain meadows it would have made a memorable introduction to the journey. However we road into 'pea soup' fog so thick we could barely see each other let alone the apparently amazing scenery as we climbed and then descended down into the valley of Beilen. We eventually arrived in the charming historic town of Altdorf, the home of William Tell. Where we settled in for the evening.

Day 2 (260 km): Altdorf to Aosta

Day two delivered three spectacular Alpine passes and some of the most impressive scenery of the journey. We first tackled Susten Pass, riding through dramatic galleries and tunnels surrounded by towering mountain peaks. From there, we continued over Grimsel Pass, where we were treated to spectacular views of the reservoir and impressive hydroelectric infrastructure. Our final major climb of the day was the iconic Grand Saint-Bernard Pass, one of the oldest and most historic crossings through the Alps. After crossing into Italy, we descended into the beautiful Aosta Valley, where we finished the day surrounded by stunning mountain scenery.

Day 3 (262 km): Aosta to Briançon

We crossed from Italy into France, beginning the day with the scenic Col du Petit Saint-Bernard before taking on one of the great highlights of the entire tour the Col de l'Iseran. At 2,764 metres, it is the highest paved mountain pass in the Alps. The climb provided spectacular views and a real sense of being high in the heart of the mountains. We continued towards Col du Mont Cenis, riding alongside its beautiful high-altitude lake before making our way to the historic fortified town of Briançon, our destination for the night.

Day 4 (280 km): Briançon to Castellane

We continued south along the legendary Route des Grandes Alpes, one of the most spectacular motorcycle routes in Europe.

Our first major challenge was Col de l'Izoard, famous for its dramatic, almost lunar landscape. We then continued south over Col de Cayolle, enjoying increasingly varied scenery as the mountains changed character.

The route took us through the spectacular Gorges de Daluis, renowned for its striking red rock formations. We also rode along the spectacular Clue de Saint-Auban Balcony Road, where breathtaking views opened up around every corner.

We finished the day in the charming town of Castellane, surrounded by the dramatic landscapes of southern France.

Day 5 (270 km): Castellane to Saint-Martin-Vésubie

Day five was dedicated to one of the great natural wonders of the region the Verdon Canyon, one of Europe's deepest and most spectacular gorges.

We spent much of the day riding the small, winding roads surrounding the canyon, with breathtaking viewpoints and dramatic scenery appearing at almost every turn. The combination of narrow roads, sweeping bends, and spectacular landscapes made this one of the most enjoyable riding days of the tour.

By the end of the day, we had reached the picturesque mountain village of Saint-Martin-Vésubie, where we spent the night.

Day 6 (300 km): Saint-Martin-Vésubie to Briançon

We began the day with the thrilling Col de Turini, famous for its endless switchbacks and challenging mountain



roads. From there, we continued towards Col de la Bonette, climbing to 2,802 metres the highest paved road in Europe.

The altitude, dramatic scenery, and winding roads made this another unforgettable section of the journey. There was also the option to add Col de l'Izoard before returning to Briançon. Having way too much fun plus making good timing we opted to this. What a thrill this would be. Again stunning scenery that you simply would not see anywhere else in the world. We eventually made our way back to Briançon after another spectacular day in the Alps.

Day 7 (300 km): Briançon to Megève

We headed north through the heart of the French Alps, once again following sections of the magnificent Route des Grandes Alpes.

The day featured an impressive collection of famous mountain passes, including Col du Lautaret, Col du Galibier, Col de la Croix de Fer, and Col du Glandon. Each pass offered its own character, from dramatic high-altitude landscapes to sweeping mountain roads and spectacular panoramic views. Cormet de Roselend provided even more outstanding Alpine scenery as we meandered way down to Megève.

We finished the day near Mont Blanc in the beautiful alpine resort of Megève, a fitting destination after another exceptional day of riding.

Day 8 (260 km): Megève to San Bernardino

We left France behind and headed back into Switzerland, with another day of spectacular mountain roads ahead of us.

One of the major highlights was Furka Pass, famous not only for its dramatic scenery but also for its appearance in the James Bond film Goldfinger. The road provided spectacular views as we crossed the high Alpine terrain.

We then tackled the historic Tremola, the old cobblestone road over St. Gotthard Pass. Riding this historic route was a memorable experience and offered a wonderful contrast to the modern roads we had travelled earlier in the journey. We finished the day by crossing San Bernardino Pass before arriving at our hotel in the mountain village of San Bernardino.

Day 9 (380 km): San Bernardino to Munich

Our final riding day began with one last crossing of San Bernardino Pass, giving us a final taste of the spectacular Alpine roads before beginning our journey north. From there, we joined the motorways for the return journey to Munich. After nine days of mountain passes, winding roads, spectacular scenery, historic towns, and unforgettable riding, we arrived back in Munich in the late afternoon to return our motorcycles.

It was the perfect conclusion to an incredible Alpine adventure a journey filled with some of the most spectacular roads and scenery Europe had to offer

So in summary our passes looked like this

Day 1. Klausenpass.

Day 2. Susten Pass, Grimsel Pass, Grand Saint-Bernard.

Day 3. Col du Petit Saint-Bernard, Col de l'Iseran, Col du Mont Cenis.

Day 4. Col de l'Izoard, Col de Cayolle, Gorge de Daluis, Clule de Saint-Auban Balcony Road.

Day 5. Verdon Canyon.

Day 6. Col de Turini, Col de la Bonette, Col de l'Izoard.



Day 7. Col du Lautaret, Col du Galibier, Col de la Croix de Fer, Col du Glandon, Cormet de Roselend.

Day 8. Furka Pass, Tremolo (historic Gotthard pass), San Bernadino Pass.

Day 9. San Bernadino Pass.

Our accommodation too proved to be a bit of a highlight as well. For each little town had their own unique qualities in classic European styling. Again credit to Oliver in his talent for finding a blend of quality and affordable with a touch of old world European stylised accommodation. We each had our own room on the entire tour which, I think, was greatly appreciated by all.

Again I cannot but highly recommend Oliver and his 'MotoVibes' tour organisation. There are many YouTube videos to view his ability and variation of tours he can offer. Oliver also offers self guided tours if you prefer to do your own thing.

Quote from MotoVibes website.

'Europe has endless options. But without local knowledge, it is easy to waste days on average roads, miss the best highlights, or spend your evenings solving logistics instead of enjoying the trip.'

MotoVibes Travel is built for riders who want the best of Europe without spending weeks planning. Most riders fly in from abroad, rent a premium bike and gear through our partner locations in Hamburg, Munich, and Málaga and want a trip that is ready to ride.'

Please check them out.

So enough about me. That was great fun and an absolute highlight of my life.

I hope to tour with Oliver at some stage in the future.

Speaking of the future don't forget we have a small tour coming up on the 31st October '26 for 3 days across the

Melbourne Cup w/e. If you haven't signed up yet you best do something quickly as accommodation will book out. This time we're going west to Ballarat then Warrnambool returning via the coast road but not Lorne. I'm going to turn left beforehand and come up through Ferguson, Gellibrand and Barwon Downs. Really looking forward to this one as I have not been on my XDiavel since early May. A very long hiatus.

Also I need to give thanks to President Neil for putting together a ride to lunch at Neerim South Pub on Sunday 18th October. Thank you Neil. Much appreciated. Hope its a good one 🙌 It's my wife's birthday that weekend so I'm N/a.

Otherwise I hope you have all been getting some 2 wheeled fun in and I look forward to seeing some of you Melbourne Cup w/e.

Bitumen side down.

Chris 😊



Cols, Cows and Croissants: Eight Days in the French Alps



The plan

Eight days, three countries (mainly France), more passes than either of us can name: that was our 2026 Tour de French Alps in late September. We found balcony roads carved into cliff faces, Tour de France climbs, a gravel track we never meant to ride, and more than a few detours that turned out better than the plan.

The idea was simple. We had been to France a couple of years before, on our previous Route des Grandes Alpes tour. That was an eye-opener to the beautiful roads and countryside France offers, so we planned to go back and explore in a lot more detail. I spent months researching and picking the best passes in the French Alps, and including a handful in Switzerland and Italy too, then stitching them together into a loop starting and finishing in Geneva, because that is where the bike rental shop is located. Every day was built around the cols (passes). The bits in between were just the price of admission.

We went in the shoulder season on purpose. Previous trips were usually in August, not by design but by necessity, following a couple of weddings and other events in previous years. August is European school holidays and the peak of their summer, so it's best avoided at all costs. This year we had no other commitments to sync with, so we could go anytime. We decided on the last week or so in September to ensure the crowds had gone home, the hotels had rooms, the weather would be perfect, now months after a stinking hot European summer and before the snow season starts in October. Most of all, the roads would be ours, without the hordes of caravans and touring Germans in their RS6 wagons. What we didn't factor in was that the French time September for when they fix their mountain roads.

Day 1: Getting to the good stuff

We hired the bikes from Moto-Plaisir, which sits just over the Swiss border in France. It was the only bike rental

place anywhere in the area. The alternative was collecting bikes in Milan and burning an additional day each way on the autostradas. No thanks!

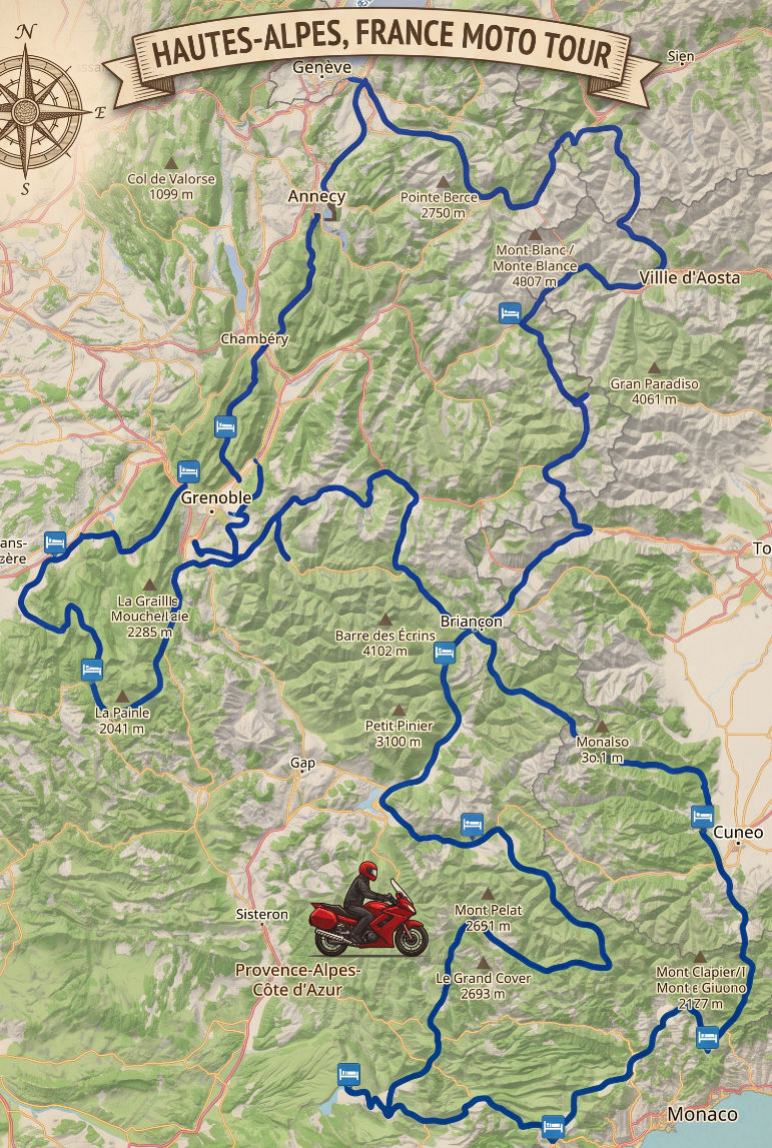
The rental shop was very well organised. They sent a 'shuttle' to collect us from the airport, and when our flight landed late on a Thursday afternoon, the driver and the shop hung around to wait for us. We went straight from the airport to the shop on day 0 in the BMW 5 Series 'shuttle' and did all the paperwork and payments the night before we collected the bikes. Next morning the bikes were out the front, ready to load, and we were on the road in under half an hour.

Anyone who's hired bikes in Europe knows the morning queue. If you don't skip it, you're waiting hours for Japanese tourists to get acquainted with Dyna Glides and GSs they can barely tiptoe onto. The shop opens at 9. We were rolling by 9:30 with a big day ahead.

Day 1 was mostly a transport day. Getting from metro Geneva to the mountain roads was just on the highway with heavy traffic until we stopped for a break just past Chamonix (Mont Blanc). After the highways and into the backroads, the Col des Montets was our first proper pass, empty and lovely. The road surface was excellent; there was minimal traffic and even less enforcement lingering around.

The pass flows over the border to Switzerland and onto the Great St Bernard Pass, which looks like a scene from a movie. We stopped at the top to grab a coffee and even patted some local St Bernard doggos on their morning walk. Watch your speed in Switzerland like a hawk. Swiss fines are the kind where you'd rather do the jail time. The only place worse than Victoria when it comes to speeding fines.

The Colle San Carlo was next, a cracking little piece of road, and then afterwards came the Little St Bernard Pass to close out the day. Four passes on day 1, then some



more twisties to get to the hotel. Along the way we were dicing with some local riders on the mountain roads before Dad got held up by a herd of 30-odd cows being moved across the road. I know if you make a bit of engine noise, the cows usually get out of your way. That's how I got past the herd, before a marauding local on an M 1000 XR caught up. Dad, on the other hand, was on a Tracer 900 GT and was head-to-head with the local Beemer rider, not knowing how to politely ask the cows to move out of his way. The M1000 would pull away on every uphill straight, but Dad would reel him in at every switchback. Repeat for several kilometres.

We were on the bikes from 9:30 till 6. Long first day. Eventually we reached our hotel at a French ski resort, which felt like a converted prison, with a labyrinth of corridors and a very complicated route to the garage. We slept fine and were on the road early the next morning.

Day 2: Iseran, and a lesson in fuel

The Col de l'Iseran was the first pass and easily the highlight of the day, possibly the trip (do not miss this pass if you are in France!). Perfect surface, flowing, through Val d'Isère and up. Two locals ahead of us were setting a decent pace, so we sat behind them for a bit as we adjusted to the high-alps speeds. The Col d'Izoard was next. Excellent views from the top, but not quite at the same surface as the Iseran. It's very famous from the Tour

EIGHT DAYS IN THE FRENCH ALPS

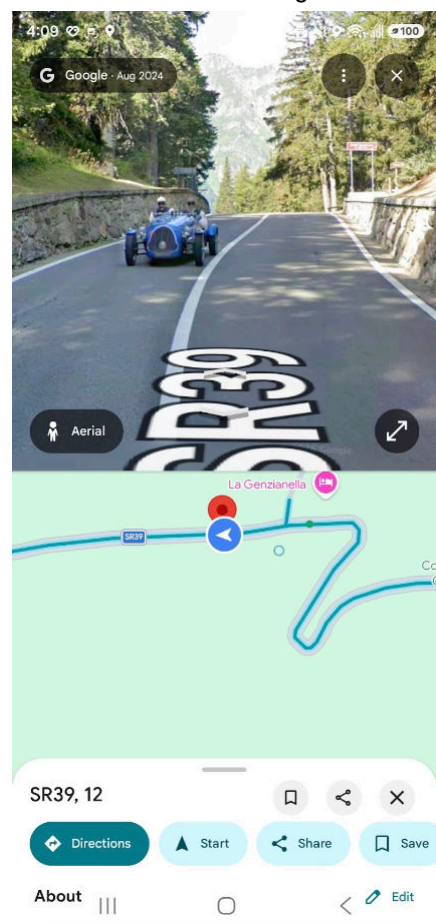
de France. Then we picked up the D902, the official 'Route des Grandes Alpes', and more or less followed it for the rest of the day.

It's worth mentioning that each country in Europe has its own road numbering system, and once you understand the different types of roads, you realise which are best for bikes. In Italy, those are the SR, SP and SS roads, such as the SS125 in Sardinia. In Spain, it's the National, or N, roads, and in France, it's the D roads, such as the D71 or the D902, which are maintained by each département and are generally well surfaced, wide and smooth with clear road markings.



Around lunchtime came a small scare. My bike showed 40 km of range and it was around 15km to the next servo that promised 24-hour fuel. Except that when we reached it, it was switched off over the weekend, much to the disappointment of locals and international tourists alike. I must have explained to half a dozen other motorists using wacky hand signals and vulgar gestures that the blessed automatic servo was in fact not operational for the day. The next station was 26 km away and my bike was showing 25 km of range. Having run out of fuel several times before, the most recent only a few weeks ago on the M1, I was apprehensive about risking it, but nonetheless we ventured forth, my bike in sixth gear, road mode, barely breathing on the throttle the whole way. We rolled into the next servo and I had actually gained 3 km of range!

That detour turned out to be a gift. Our planned col already had a seasonal closure, so we'd have had to turn around anyway.



Instead we found a road we never meant to ride: a balcony road cut into the side of a gorge, with tunnels hacked through the rock. The French do these balcony roads better than anyone and they are littered around the region, usually following the contours of the mountains and rivers.

We missed the Col Agnel because of it. You can't do them all.

We crossed over the border back into Italy for that night's bed and breakfast accommodation and got in around 6:30, completely cooked. Our host, a lovely grandmother with no English, began to tell us her life story. We have no Italian.

Forty minutes later we had a full house to ourselves with separate bedrooms, a kitchen stocked with every tool and treat from the local Conad (grocery store), while nonna and nonno slept in the converted chook shed in the garden.

Fuel rule from Day 2 on: top up whenever you pass a servo, with half a tank or less left.

Day 3: Landslides, gravel and fog

Day 3 headed for the southernmost point of the loop. We intended to skip Nice and Monaco; the traffic there last time was miserable, and Monaco was the only place I got a speeding ticket on the last trip. I'd spent hours on Street View checking every road. Switchbacks and good surfaces all the way.

Street View doesn't show landslides. A slide only a week or two before we arrived had shut the tunnel on the SS20, and Google Maps had no idea. The alternatives were closed too.

The SS20 tunnel cuts directly through a mountain and would have connected us from Italy back into France, but as the route was closed, there was a little pass to the side, which appeared on the map to link up with the other side of the tunnel exit. So we detoured along that pass as the visibility started to deteriorate. It wasn't just fog; it was riding through a cloud. Visibility less than 20 metres, on mountain roads with loose gravel on the surface and a vertical drop-off to the side.

That little pass we took eventually reached a mountain peak, above the clouds; however, once we reached it, we discovered more closed roads, leaving only two ways to go: back the way we came, or ascend over an old military gravel road. We sat there and debated for 30 mins whether it was a terrible idea, while the sun came out and dissipated some of the cloud.

After watching many locals go up the road, we eventually decided to give it a go. This was initially with some trepidation, as it was first dirt bikers, then some old BMWs and finally some locals in Fiat Pandas with regular road tyres traversing the gravel pass.

We didn't want to take the road bikes on Michelin Road 6s off-roading, but when faced with no other options, we followed the only path out. The gravel really wasn't that

bad; a bit slow, but incredibly scenic. Glad I did it on a rental bike; not something I'd want to do on my own Marchesini forged rims.



Once we were through the other side, the day came good. A string of smaller cols, including the Col de Turini, which was beautiful, albeit incredibly tight and unforgiving. Turini is one of the more famous roads in the Tour de France. You can see why they like it, but they are mad to ride that on pushies! After many hours negotiating switchbacks, we continued towards the Verdon Gorge and home for the night.

One trap for riders we didn't realise: it was Sunday. Rural France shuts on Sunday. Lunch was whatever we could find, which wasn't much, and we got in late. The day logged 337 km of non-stop, intense riding.

Day 4: The Verdon and the Bonette

We started on the Route des Crêtes along the north rim of the Verdon Gorge, riding west to east. Good surface, fast, almost no traffic.

The Verdon Gorge is called France's Grand Canyon. It's smaller and a different thing altogether, but it is spectacular, and riding the rim is the way to see it.



Next was the Gorges du Cians, the red gorge. Magnificent and totally different to anything else we had seen or would see in France. At the end of it, another closure, another 20–30 km detour, and another balcony road carved into the mountainside. We were starting to see a pattern: in this part of France, the detour is (luckily) often as good as the plan.



Then the Col de la Bonette, noted as one of the best views of the French Alps. We had ridden it on our previous trip, albeit from the other direction, so this time we headed from south to north, which we hadn't ridden before. At 2,802 m it's noted as the highest paved road in France. Apologies Chris, correction - this road is higher than Iseran or L'izoard!

Days 5 to 8: Alpe d'Huez, Galibier and the Vercors



By now we'd learned to roll with it. September is when the French fix their mountain roads before the snow arrives, so closures come with the territory, and in this part of the world a detour usually means another cracking road. We dropped the Col d'Allos loop when it was shut, rerouted on the fly, and found ourselves heading for one of the most famous climbs in cycling.

The detour included a blast up Alpe d'Huez, which was planned for the following day and is another famous Tour de France road. Twenty-one hairpins and a beautiful surface. Epic! On the way down, another closure sent us halfway back up and onto a farm road, the kind with an F on the end of the number (think D212F). It was barely a car wide and steep enough to remind Dad of Bolivia's Road of Death. We stopped about seven times to let oncoming cars squeeze past. One stretch was marked in fluorescent yellow spray paint, which is never a good sign.

The Col du Galibier was the following day and stunning, right up until the barrier. Right at the top of the pass, after climbing the mountain, another tunnel was blocked off, and the adjoining bypass road had also been closed.



The third-last day sadly saw rain join us and I got drenched. We had a loop planned to the west of Grenoble, provided by Bike.co.uk's amazing database of their past tours, but sadly due to the weather we made a beeline to Grenoble to wait out the rain. If you have never changed into dry underpants in a McDonald's bathroom while juggling your riding suit, I can tell you all about it, but I'll save that for a future article! At least that bathroom had a sitting toilet, unlike many squatters throughout France!

The second-last day was still quite damp, but the Vercors area delivered. The Col de Menée was a highlight, and the Col de la Machine, a road hanging off a cliff face, was epic, dramatic, riding along a tight pass carved 2m out of a



mountain. On some days we counted a dozen passes, including the little connectors you barely notice.

The final run on the last day was about 100 km of twisty roads into Annecy, the Venice of the Alps. From there we took the highway back into Geneva and returned the bikes without a scratch and, fingers crossed, no tickets in the mail.



The bikes, and everyone else's

We rode a BMW F 900 XR and a Yamaha Tracer 900 GT, and swapped once partway through. A Multistrada V4 wasn't available, but would have been my preference. The more premium bikes only cost another €10–€20 extra per day. For this trip, what we had was the right call. Rental price per day was €129 + €20 for upgraded insurance, so around \$200 AUD per day. Fuel is not cheap in Europe; it's around €2.50, or \$4 per litre!

The BMW had the stronger engine, felt lighter and used less fuel, on average about 12L per fill. Its low seat made long days uncomfortable and it would be the first thing to change. The Tracer was the better tourer overall, even if not quite as quick through and out of the corners: comfortable riding position, a good electric screen, and panniers with central locking and interior lights! It has a flat spot in the rev range and a hard seat, and it would love a tune and a louder pipe.

As for everyone else, roughly 80% of the bikes on the road were GSs and a few Multistradas. The GSs outnumbered the Multis many times over and are everywhere in Europe, solo and in packs. The Multis travelled in groups. Saturday brought out hundreds of riders, and I've never seen so many Ducatis in one day: Multis, a couple of Panos, one Monster, and a brand-new Hypermotard SP that looked like it was on its first ride.

This corner of Europe works for every kind of two-wheeler. Search the map for "col" and you'll find thousands. Plenty are too narrow or unsealed for a tourer, but they suit mountain bikes, e-bikes, trials, enduro and adventure bikes. Whatever you ride, there are cols for you to conquer.

A few other notes for members. Road surfaces are infinitely better than Victoria's. Switzerland is close to immaculate, France is very well kept and a genuine 9/10 overall for its roads. Italy has the most potholes and cracks from weathering. The worst surfaces sit high on the passes themselves, where freezing winters crack the road; the best are often the approach roads below. In Italy, the SS roads are well maintained and the SPs are a lottery. In France, a higher D number often means a better road, which takes some getting used to.

There was almost no roadkill in France and Police were scarce too. European speed cameras are signposted and housed in bright orange boxes. Locals ignore them anyway. We would not test that in Switzerland. I remember a few years ago reading about the French protesting against the speed cameras by setting them on fire or spray-painting over them, which we saw on the last trip. Sadly that appears to be no more, but apps like Waze alert you to each one.



What we'd do differently

The French Alps are better riding overall than the Swiss Alps. Switzerland is more spectacular to look at, and its passes are classic switchback climbs. France mixes it up: sweepers, tight twisties, long climbs, river valleys and balcony roads. Next time I'd start with a day or two in Switzerland, then cross into France.

If you're planning your own trip, here's what we learned the hard way.

- **Ride less per day.** We planned too much. Actual riding ran past eight hours a day before stops. Cap it at about 250 km and aim to arrive by 3 or 4pm, with time for a walk, a beer and the sunset.
- **Base yourself.** Stay two or three nights in one place and ride day loops. You'll repeat some roads, but you stop packing and unpacking every morning. Grenoble, Nice and Geneva are all good bases; Annecy is 40 minutes from Geneva.
- **Schedule rest days.** One every three riding days, in a town with something to do off the bike. Don't go past about eight days of hard riding without a break. The passes start to blur.
- **Plan for detours.** September is road-repair season, so check closures each morning, sync them to every GPS and have a plan B. Staying 2–3 nights in one place makes this easy: if a road is shut or the weather turns, you simply ride a different loop.
- **Fuel early.** Top up every day, as soon as your tank goes below half full.

- **Plan lunch.** On Sundays in rural France, everything is shut. Supermarkets like Intermarché are a touring rider's best friend: salads, rolls, gazpacho, toilets, even coin laundries out the front, but opening times vary.
- **Spend a bit more on beds.** Basic guesthouses do the job, but a great hotel at the end of a long day lifts the whole trip.
- **Score each pass.** Rate every pass out of 10 at the end of each day. We didn't, and we regret it.

As for the great food debate, Dad and I didn't settle it. A French entrecôte at €27–28 is a thinner cut than a \$38 pub steak back home, and our country bakeries hold their own. It felt like prices in Europe were similar amounts; just switch the currencies. It was €16 for a Maccas meal; the same would have cost \$16 in Australia. Food for thought.

Would I go back? Without question. Go in early September, straight after the European school holidays end. You'll get the empty roads, the warm days and the best of the Alps before the road crews and the snow move in.

Timing is everything. Captain Chris rode many of the same passes only a week or two before us on a guided MotoVibes tour (his report is in this issue) and didn't hit a single closure. He got his timing spot on; we were a fortnight late. Two very different ways to tackle the Alps: one fully organised, one entirely DIY. Both come highly recommended.

Grand Alps Tour, September 2027?

After two trips to France and many to other parts of Europe, I'm convinced this corner of the world has some of the best riding on the planet, and it would be even better with a group of DOCV riders. I'm thinking of a guided or semi-guided Grand Alps tour next September: fly into Geneva, hire bikes, base ourselves in two or three towns and ride the best cols in France, Switzerland and Italy. Around 8–10 days, with rest days built in. Or maybe Corsica and Sardinia....

If you're interested, even just maybe, email me at editor@docv.org now. The earlier we know numbers, the easier it is to lock in bikes, accommodation and dates. If we get enough keen riders, we'll start planning properly.



Victoria's Pothole Problem: A Serious Issue for Motorcycle Riders

Geraint Gardner

lettera del segretario



For Victorian motorcyclists, the condition of the road beneath us is more than an issue of comfort. It can be a genuine safety issue.

As members of the Ducati Owners Club, many of us enjoy some of Victoria's best riding roads — from winding regional routes and mountain roads to weekend runs through Gippsland, the Yarra Ranges, the High Country and beyond. But deteriorating road surfaces, potholes, broken edges, loose gravel and uneven repairs deserve increasing attention from every rider.

And the concern about Victoria's roads isn't simply anecdotal.

What the evidence says about Victoria's roads

In September 2026, the Victorian Auditor-General's Office released its report *Maintaining State Roads*.

One of its most significant findings was that the proportion of Victoria's state-managed roads assessed as being in poor or very poor condition increased from 39 per cent in 2021 to 48 per cent in 2024.

The Auditor-General also found that there is a substantial and growing maintenance backlog and reported that the Department of Transport and Planning had advised the Victorian Government that available funding was not sufficient to meet all of the network's maintenance needs.

The State Government has responded with increased investment. The 2026–27 Victorian Budget committed \$1.04 billion to road maintenance, including rebuilding, repairing and resurfacing roads, with 70 per cent of that funding allocated to regional Victoria.

Transport Victoria also reports that its crews have repaired an average of approximately 250,000 potholes per year since 2019, demonstrating the enormous scale of maintaining Victoria's road network.

There is therefore substantial maintenance activity taking place — but equally, there is clear evidence that significant parts of the network have deteriorated.

For riders, that matters.

Why potholes are different on a motorcycle

A pothole that produces an uncomfortable thump in a car can have much more serious consequences for a motorcycle.

Transport Victoria specifically recognises that road-surface defects can destabilise motorcycles and says defects on curves and in braking zones are particularly hazardous to riders.

The problem isn't restricted to deep potholes.

Riders need to watch for:

- *potholes and broken pavement*
- *uneven patch repairs*
- *rutting and depressions*
- *broken road edges and edge drop-offs*
- *loose gravel and debris*
- *shiny or repaired bitumen with different grip characteristics*
- *water concealing road damage*
- *deteriorating surfaces through corners and braking zones.*

A motorcycle relies on a very small tyre contact area with the road. When that contact is suddenly disrupted, the rider may lose steering accuracy, braking performance or traction.

The danger can become greater when a rider encounters a defect while leaned over through a corner, braking, riding in the wet or travelling on a road where there is little room to safely change line.

Regional roads deserve particular attention

This is especially relevant to recreational riders because many of the roads we seek out are regional, rural and winding roads.

Transport Victoria itself acknowledged this issue when establishing its Motorcycle Enhanced Maintenance Scheme trial on Dargo Road.

The department noted that rural and regional roads with lower traffic volumes can receive a smaller share of maintenance funding because they may not have the same strategic importance for freight or communities. Yet those same winding and undulating roads can be highly attractive to recreational motorcyclists.

The RACV's 2026 My Country Road survey provides further evidence of community concern. More than 6,000 people participated, and 71 per cent identified potholes and poor road condition as a safety concern, making it the most commonly identified issue in the survey.

This doesn't mean every Victorian regional road is unsafe. It does mean riders should never assume that a road they rode safely six months ago will be in exactly the same condition today.

Rain, flooding, heavy vehicles, repairs and normal pavement deterioration can change a road remarkably quickly.

Motorcycle riders remain vulnerable

The broader motorcycle road-trauma statistics provide important context.

According to the TAC, motorcycles represent only around four per cent of registered vehicles in Victoria, yet riders account for a disproportionately high share of road trauma.

At the beginning of October 2026, the TAC reported that motorcyclists account for approximately 21 per cent of Victorian road deaths and around 20 per cent of serious injuries. It also reported that 1,152 motorcyclists were seriously injured during 2025.



Those statistics are not evidence that potholes caused those crashes, and it would be misleading to suggest otherwise.

What they do demonstrate is the vulnerability of motorcycle riders when something goes wrong. We don't have the protective structure, seatbelts or airbags surrounding occupants of a passenger vehicle.

That makes avoiding preventable risks particularly important.

What Ducati Owners Club riders can do

We cannot control the condition of every road, but we can change how we approach that risk.

Scan further ahead. Don't focus only on the motorcycle immediately in front of you. Transport Victoria recommends observing the road ahead and adjusting speed for changing conditions. Looking further through the road gives you more time to identify surface changes.

Increase following distances. Transport Victoria recommends at least a three-second gap to the vehicle ahead. On unfamiliar or deteriorated roads, increasing that buffer gives you additional vision and reaction time.

This is particularly important during club rides. Riding too closely can mean the lead rider sees a pothole while riders further back don't see it until there is virtually no time to react.

Don't blindly follow another rider's line. Every rider needs sufficient vision to make their own assessment of the road surface.

Slow before the corner. If the surface is questionable, establish an appropriate speed before leaning the motorcycle. Discovering a pothole halfway through a corner while heavily leaned over dramatically reduces your available options.

Allow yourself an escape route. Good road positioning isn't simply about the ideal racing line. On public roads, position yourself to maximise vision and maintain space around potential hazards.

Take extra care after rain. Apart from reduced grip, water can conceal the depth and shape of potholes.

Avoid sudden reactions where possible. Spotting a pothole late and immediately swerving can potentially place a rider into oncoming traffic, another motorcycle or roadside infrastructure. Maintaining sufficient vision, speed and following distance is what gives a rider options before an emergency manoeuvre becomes necessary.

Use your Ducati's safety technology — but don't rely on it to overcome physics. Modern Ducati motorcycles can feature sophisticated ABS, traction control and, on many models, cornering ABS and other electronic rider aids. These technologies can substantially assist a rider, but they cannot make a badly positioned motorcycle immune to a major road-surface defect.



Wear proper protective equipment every ride. A quality helmet, abrasion-resistant jacket and pants, gloves and motorcycle boots remain essential. The TAC strongly promotes the principle of wearing full protective equipment every time you ride.

A suggestion for Ducati Owners Club rides

There is also an opportunity for us as a club to become more systematic about road-condition safety.

Before organised rides, ride leaders could check known roadworks and recent road-condition information on the planned route.

During rides, significant potholes, gravel, damaged road edges or unexpected surface conditions could be communicated at the next safe stopping point so that following groups are aware of them.

Where a serious hazard is identified, the club should consider reporting it rather than assuming someone else already has.

Transport Victoria operates a 24-hour road-hazard number — 13 11 70 — for urgent hazards presenting an immediate danger. Non-urgent issues such as smaller potholes can be submitted through Transport Victoria's online road-issue reporting system.

Importantly, Transport Victoria does not manage every road. It manages most freeways and arterial roads, while approximately 150,000 kilometres of other Victorian roads are managed by councils and other government bodies. On council-managed roads, the relevant council may therefore be the appropriate authority to contact.

If there is an immediate emergency, call 000.

Consider carrying a Motorcycle Crash Card

One additional initiative worth considering across our club is Victoria's Motorcycle Crash Card.

The free card is placed inside a rider's helmet and contains personal and emergency information that trained first responders can access following a crash. A red sticker on

the helmet alerts emergency personnel that the card is inside.

It is a simple precaution that we should consider encouraging for both riders and pillion passengers.

The responsibility is shared

Governments and road authorities have an obligation to appropriately inspect, maintain and repair the road network. The Victorian Government has committed substantial additional funding, and maintenance crews are repairing hundreds of thousands of potholes.

At the same time, the Victorian Auditor-General has provided objective evidence that the condition of the state road network has deteriorated and that a substantial maintenance backlog exists.

For motorcycle riders, that isn't a political argument. It's a safety issue.

Our responsibility as riders is to recognise the environment we're riding in and adjust accordingly.

That means leaving more room, looking further ahead, choosing an appropriate speed, maintaining our motorcycles, wearing the right equipment and reporting serious hazards when we encounter them.

A Ducati is designed to make the most of a great road.

But on Victorian roads in 2026, perhaps one of the most important skills we can bring to every ride is recognising when the road underneath us isn't as good as it should be.

Ride smart. Look ahead. Leave room. Report hazards. And make sure everyone gets home safely.

Ducati Owners Club – Rider Safety



MAXIMA CHAIN WAX

Tom Hinton

Ducatis, for many years, have been using O ring or X ring chains which have a seal between the sideplates to keep the pins lubricated.

The roller that contacts the sprocket is NOT sealed however.

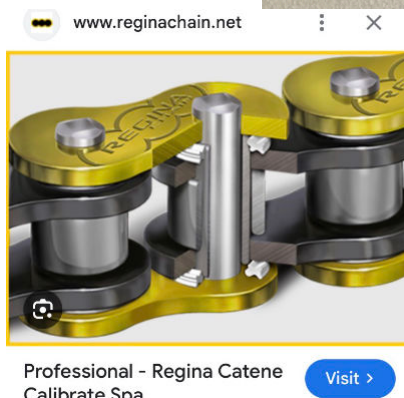
The roller definitely needs lubricant as it rotates on the outside of the bushing and it is experiencing pretty high loads.

The Regina Chains picture shows the placement of the X ring seal and makes clear that the roller is not sealed.

When the chain lubricant I used to use became unavailable, I looked on the internet and found this comprehensive test.

<https://www.bennetts.co.uk/bikesocial/reviews/products/motorcycle-maintenance-and-servicing/best-motorcycle-chain-lube>

After studying the test results, I decided to try the Maxima chain wax as it seemed to suit me best. I've been using it on my Monster now for over 40,000kms and I'm very happy with it.



It comes in both 218ml and 535ml aerosol cans. I use the big can in my garage and keep the small can with the bike to use when I'm away on a trip or immediately after riding in the rain.



2027 GRAMPIANS "Ride to Remember"

Sunday, 7th February

Ararat - Western Vic



Registration: \$55 Rider/Pillion
Open to all Licensed Riders
(Includes Morning Tea, Picnic Lunch, 2027 Commemorative Badge & Bike Sticker, Bottled Water etc)

<https://www.trybooking.com/DQMRO>

Join us for a spectacular 190km Ride starting at 9am in Ararat and travelling the rural countryside to Crowlands, Landsborough then alongside the Pyrenees mountain range to Glenlofty, Eversley, Warrack and onto the Buangor Recreation Reserve for morning tea. The Ride then heads along the Western Highway and turns off to Raglan, Chute, Elmhurst before returning to Ararat via the Pyrenees Highway for a relaxing lunch at the Alexandra Gardens.















DUCATI MOTOGP PODCASTS

The Oxley Bom MotoGP podcast is presented by the duo of Matt Oxley, a renowned motorcycle journalist and ex-racer, and Peter Bom, a world championship winning crew chief and data technician.

Matt and Peter are well connected in the MotoGP world, and present a well-researched, analytical, BS free and easy-to-understand podcast.

Available on Spotify and wherever you get your podcasts.

Recent excellent episodes focussed on Ducati are:

4 July 2026 Season 4, Episode 26 – The bikes from Bologna.
 Focuses on Ducati history in Ducati's 100th anniversary year.



The Bikes From Bologna

It's the fourth of July, and that means we have something to celebrate! Yes, on this very day, a very long time ago, a bunch of dudes thought up something that would grow into a world-changing institution whose age has reached the triple digits...

July 04, 2026 • Season 4 • Episode 26 • 1:13:58



20 April 2025 Season 3 Episode 11 – Decoding Ducati's



MotoGP - Decoding Ducati's Desmosedici

If you want to know the secret to Ducati's success, it's these four words: desmodromic distribution, sixteen valves. Or, if we call it by its more common Italian shorthand: Desmosedici, the name of Ducati's killer Mo...

April 20, 2025 • Season 3 • Episode 11 • 1:07:35



4 May 2025 Season 3 Episode 13 – Decoding Ducati's Desmosedici – part



Decoding Ducati's Desmosedici - Part Deux!

For the first time, we're going back for seconds! That's right, it's time for a sequel as we go back to our history of Ducati's Desmosedici and take care of our unfinished business. Haven't heard the first part yet?

May 04, 2025 • Season 3 • Episode 13 • 1:06:52



There's also a very interesting chat with Aussie Bob Barnard who designed the Phillip Island track, and is now an internationally renowned race track designer and consultant:



Interview - Bob Barnard is Barely Bothered

Sadly, we've lost Philip Island. So now what's going to take us back to Australia? Well, welcome to the Adelaide Street Circuit. It's 4,13 km (2,57 miles) long, has 15 turns and might run straight through some very special parkland....

September 06, 2026 • Season 4 • Episode 35 • 1:01:49



And if you decide to subscribe and become a Patreon supporter there are some exclusive interviews. Eg. This one with Casey Stoner:



Mat's Archive: Casey Stoner

Hey everyone! This week, I'm afraid that Mat and Peter are lost in the late-December limbo. So instead, we're giving all of you a holiday present in the form of a (formerly) Patreon-exclusive post. This interview with Casey was first published ...

December 29, 2024 • Season 2 • 42:45



IS VW SELLING DUCATI?

By your *Desmoto financial analyst*

There have been posts all over my social media feed regarding the possible sale of Ducati by the VW Group. Most of these have some facts correct, and others way off. Even worse are some of the comments.

So what's actually going on?

First, some facts on ownership of Ducati (courtesy of Gemini AI but fact checked to some degree):

Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A. is ultimately owned by the German automotive giant Volkswagen Group through a tiered corporate chain involving Audi and Lamborghini.

Complete Ownership Structure

- **Volkswagen Group (Volkswagen AG):** At the top of the corporate hierarchy, the German multi-brand car manufacturer holds ultimate control of the group
- **AUDI AG:** Volkswagen Group owns a controlling stake in Audi, operating it as a core luxury and performance brand within the larger automotive portfolio.
- **Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A.:** Audi fully owns the Italian supercar maker Lamborghini.
- **Ducati Motor Holding S.p.A.:** Lamborghini formally acquired 100% of Ducati on July 19, 2012, placing the iconic motorcycle manufacturer under the Lamborghini and Audi umbrella within the Volkswagen Group ecosystem.

To get some answers on what's been discussed, we went to a reputable source, Bloomberg Financial News, and their interview with Audi Chief Executive Officer Gernot Döllner:

VW Weighs Selling Motorcycle Maker Ducati in Review of Holdings



New Ducati motorcycles in Bologna, Italy. Photographer: Alessia Pierdomenico/Bloomberg

By William Wilkes

September 8, 2026 at 6:53 AM UTC

Volkswagen AG is considering offloading motorcycle manufacturer Ducati, as part of a sweeping overhaul of the German automaker's sprawling portfolio.

The Italian brand is among the 600 out of Volkswagen's 2,000 businesses being reviewed, Audi Chief Executive Officer Gernot Döllner said in an interview. The storied maker of high-performance bikes is part of VW's Audi group.

"Within the Volkswagen Group, we are committed to a disciplined, responsible portfolio management," Döllner said. "It's part of the evaluation process that we'll also talk about Ducati, but nothing has been decided."

The Bologna-based company, known for making "superbikes" such as the Panigale, may be worth roughly €1.25 billion (\$1.5 billion) based on peers' valuations, according to Bloomberg Intelligence analyst Michael Dean.

Volkswagen is trying to slim down in an effort to make Europe's biggest carmaker more competitive. The supervisory board last week approved a restructuring package that calls for shrinking its portfolio of businesses and holdings by roughly a third. In June, the group agreed to sell 51% of its Everlence ship-engine unit that's expected to generate about €7.4 billion.

Audi acquired Ducati in 2012. The company explored selling the 100-year-old manufacturer in 2017 before abandoning the process amid opposition from German labor representatives. Ducati has since strengthened its position as one of motorcycle racing's dominant names, winning six consecutive MotoGP constructors' championships since 2020.

Its success has helped give the marque something of the Ferrari aura in the motorcycle world, with its fiercely loyal followers known as "Ducatisti."

Any sale would carry particular symbolism for Volkswagen's controlling Porsche-Piëch clan: late patriarch Ferdinand Piëch, a motorcycle enthusiast, personally championed the 2012 acquisition and later served on Ducati's board. Still, its typical operating margin is below the 9% target Volkswagen CEO Oliver Blume wants the broader group to achieve by 2030.

Ducati sells around 50,000 units a year, and generated €925 million of revenue last year and a €52 million operating profit.

Motorcyclist Awareness Month

OCTOBER 2026

OCTOBER IS MOTORCYCLIST AWARENESS MONTH

Every October, Motorcyclist Awareness Month (MAM) reminds everyone on our roads to look out for each other. It's an initiative of the Motorcycling Community Engagement Panel, supported by the TAC, the Department of Transport and Planning and Victoria Police, and this year's ambassador is Ross Noble.

The message is simple: Share the road. Keep everyone safe.

As a rider you can: ride to the conditions; wear protective gear on every ride; position yourself to maximise your visibility and vision.

As a driver you can: give motorcyclists space to ride safely; look twice at intersections; check your mirrors and blind spots.

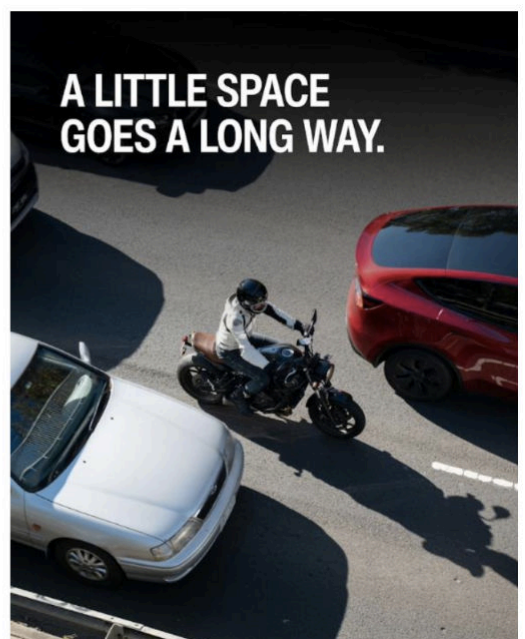
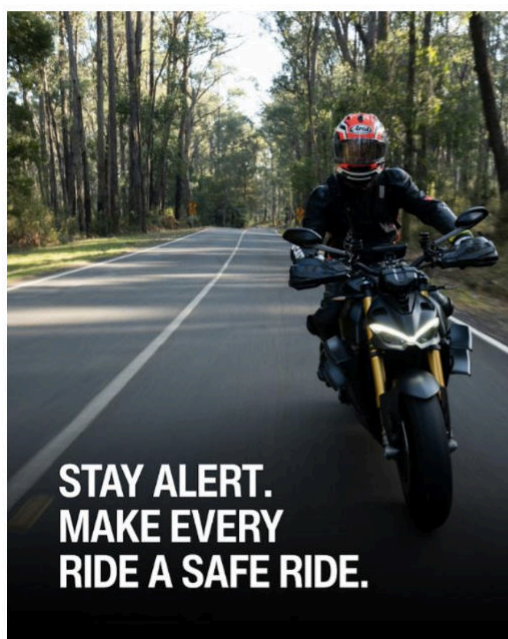
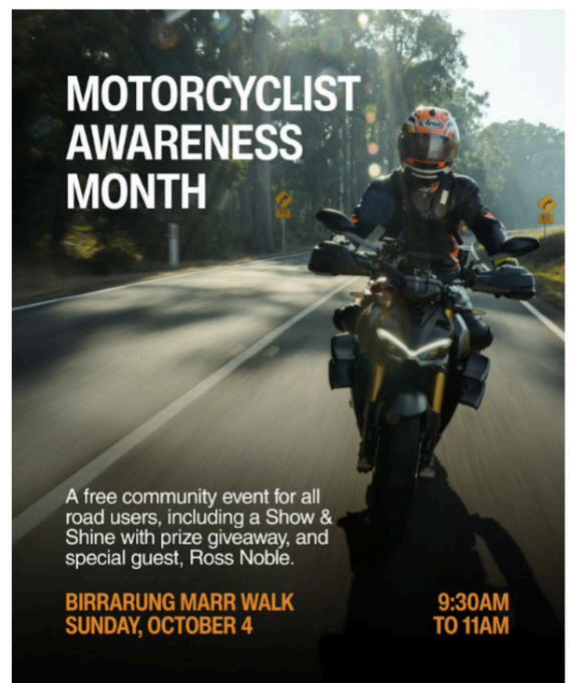
The "awareness" part is about non-riders: drivers' brains tend to filter out what they aren't looking for. Print a MAM poster for the lunch room at work, or just have the conversation with a non-riding mate - the next bike they see might be you.

At the October social meeting (Tuesday 20 October, The Manningham), Matt will be handing out red emergency cards - grab one for your jacket.

Follow the MAM Facebook page and YouTube channel for the campaign videos. If you or someone you know needs support because of road trauma, contact Amber Community on 1300 367 797 (ambercommunity.org.au).

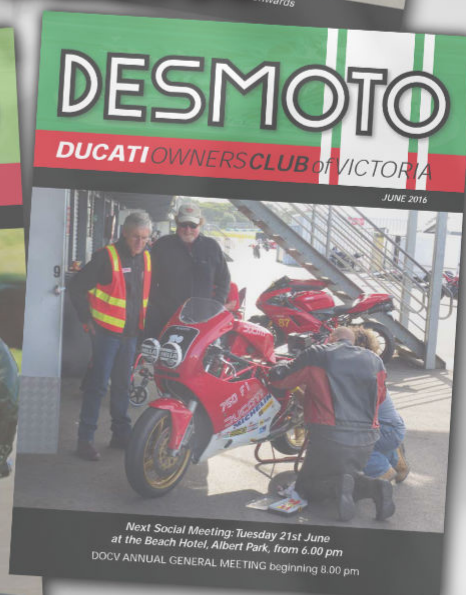
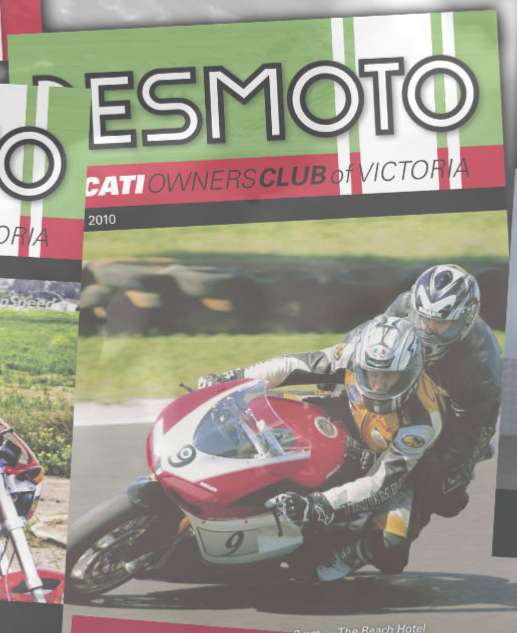
Sources: TAC MAM

Stakeholder Kit 2026;
VMC email (Rob, VMC
Chair) forwarded by
Tom Hinton 1 Oct 2026.
Red cards note: Matt.



A BLAST FROM THE PAST

From the Desmoto Archives



EUROPEAN VACATION



We headed off with the freshly service bikes over the Futa Pass and through a bit of country we recognised from 2006 when we rode much of the area with other countries' DOC presidents during the 2006 World Presidents' Meeting (WPM). The roads became tight and twisty as well as surrounded by stunning scenery. We were off to Castelnouvo Magna which looked OK when we consulted Mr Google, but it was confused by the nearby town of Castelnouvo, featuring houses fixed to the sides of extremely steep countryside. It's inland from Cinque Terra and the architectural similarities are obvious. I guess if you live in hilly country-side you do things differently. It is spectacular to see. The highlight road was "passo dello Cisa " or Cisa pass – we met some Italians at Phillip island who told us we must do that one.

From there we headed to our last night's stop in Italy in a wine commune called Bene Vagienna in the Cuneo province.

My Italian being what it is, that translated to 'Good Vagina' a friendly sounding place if ever there was one.

We stayed at a little BandB we'd booked on booking.com. The woman spoke not a word of English and she had that in common with the local bar/restaurant we found our way to. It was to be the ONLY night away on this trip where we had no English dialogue with the townspeople.

As luck has it we know our way around Italian restaurant menus (having owned one a few years ago) and simple words like 'vino' and 'birra' and 'vodka e l'orange' as well as the mandatory 'café ' got us through. When we got back that night our hostess had placed a bowl of hazelnuts and a small bottle of Limoncello out for us.

The evening was still about 30 degrees and it proved a delightful way to spend our last night in Italy (for a few days) sitting on our private balcony amongst the vines.

Day 85 started the with col della Lombarde (2350m) then Col de la Bonnette (2802m). Awesome riding and scenery and the day on which we took the 'photo of the trip'. We stayed in the French Alpine town of Briançon.

You know sometimes you stay a in a place, soak it up and leave. Briançon though is fascinating. It would be a great place to spend a week or two. A day or two with push bikes too would be good. The history, the scenery, not to mention the stunning riding; it's all amazing. We may get back there one day.

Nearing Bene Vagienna – serious wine country.





Col de la Bonette (that's our bikes near the middle).

We left there for Nus in Italy. We were making our way to Como. The roads we travelled read like the who's who of roads.

- Col d'Izoard,
- Col de la Galibier,
- Col de l'Isère.
- Col de petite St Bernard
- Paso de Picolo St Bernard.

We stopped at Nus and found a couple of local bike nuts, one a Ducati 1098 owner. The others freely admitted that they couldn't afford one.

"Why are you going to Como?" one asked. We explained it was famous and we thought we should see it. "But there is nothing there" we were told. "There are many small villages that are better near the lake".

The drinking was big that afternoon in the 35 degree temperature. Sue was accidentally plastered. Drinking Vodka and Orange, the Italians use little bottle of orange juice. Using a big glass, the barrista poured vodka over the ice, the orange juice over that and decided that as the glass was too big it should be topped up. She used vodka. That

happened 3 or 4 times before Sue suddenly decided she was not on top of her game. Dinner that night was a great pizza (there is a lot of that over there you know) and a bottle of vino that yours truly was forced to deal with alone. The things you do for your loved ones!

We headed to Como the next day as planned.

The day was mostly 36 degrees. It was hot. We were told by people we met that much of Europe was enduring a heatwave. In helmets and leathers it was starting to drain us. In Como that first night the temperature was still 30 degrees at midnight.

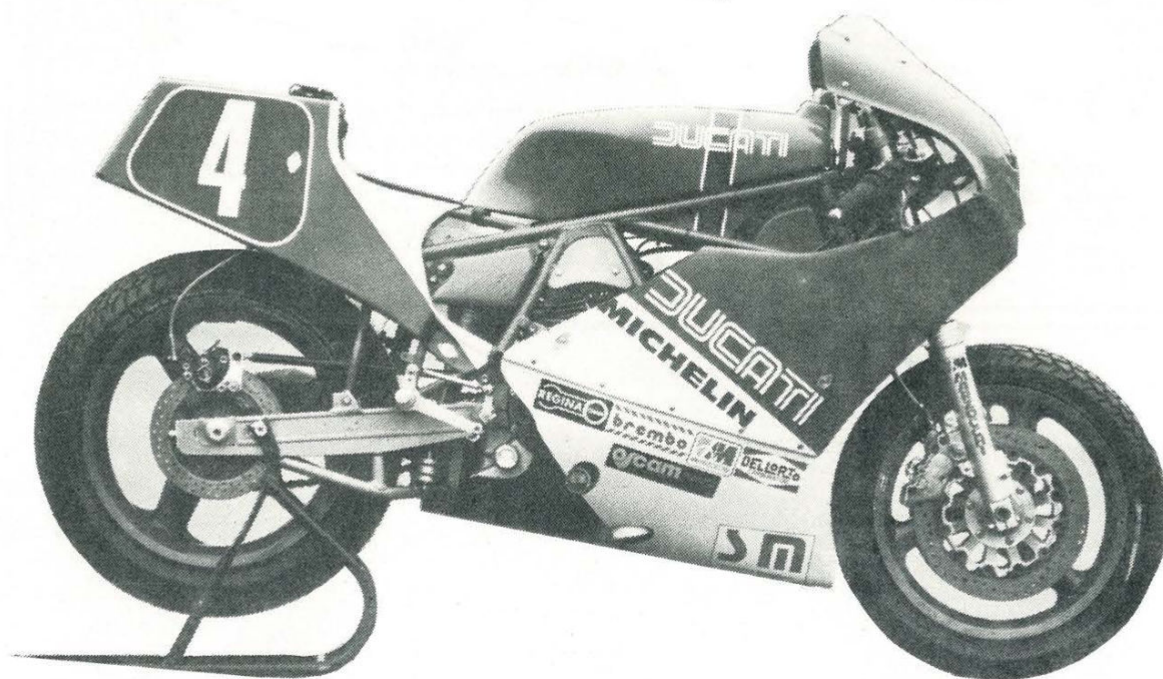
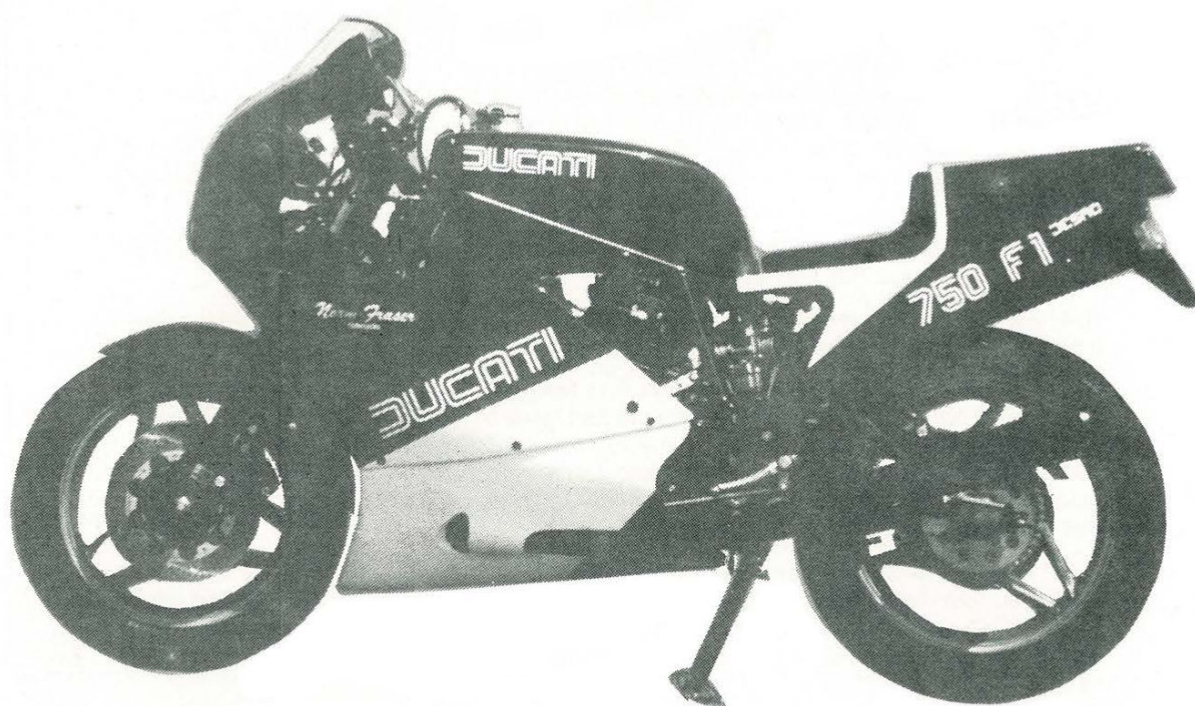


The Como Gaol.

DESMOTO

May 1986

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE DUCATI OWNERS CLUB OF VICTORIA (INC.)
P.O. BOX 16, BOX HILL, VICTORIA, 3128



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A Short Club History

Late in 1975 a meeting was held by a group of Ducati owners who were interested in forming their own club. The aims of this club were to help owners understand their machines better by doing their own maintenance work and also provide a social atmosphere where owners could meet and talk to people with interests similar to their own.

A steering committee was formed early in 1976 and the first official meeting was held in the Model Railways Hall 9th March, 1976.

Only owners of Ducati motorcycles could join initially, but this was soon changed to allow anyone interested in Ducatis to join the club.

Membership was only around 25 for the first few years and incoming funds only just covered the hall hire costs. May '77 saw the first issue of the club newsletter. This was a good way to spread information to all members, especially those in country areas who couldn't get to meetings. In '79 the club almost folded due to lagging enthusiasm, but a new dynamic committee revived interest and soon club membership was up around the fifty mark.

In '81 another dedicated committee ran a club stand at the first MRA show, and also organised our first Pyramid Hill rally. These two events more than doubled club membership and have been run every year since. A surplus of funds now meant the club could buy badges, stickers, chains, sprockets, etc., and provide a better quality newsletter.

1984 was a high point for the club with the raffle of a Mike Hailwood replica, raising a lot of capital for the club. This money allowed a spare parts scheme to be started and enabled stocks of regularly used items to be held for club members to buy.

Now, in our tenth year with over 200 members on the books, long-time members like myself are justifiably proud of how far the club has come from such a small beginning. We hope the club continues on its successful path – but remember – it needs a little help from you, the members, to do it.

Peter Shearman

MAY, 1986.

PAGE 1.

DUCATI OWNERS CLUB OF VICTORIA (INC.)1986 /87 D.O.C.V. COMMITTEE.

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SECRETARY :	Stewart Marshall	Ph. (H) 551 2811.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CREDIT : Should any Club choose to use any of the articles from this magazine, please acknowledge the source of any borrowed article as being from the Ducati Owner's Club of Victoria. (If it is original).

We always name the source of any borrowed article and do not object to any Club from copying if it is considered valuable information to their members.

CLUB T-SHIRTS.

The Club has taken delivery of another shipment of T-shirts for 2 sizes smaller than we previously held in stock, plus some more of the larger sizes which have become depleted. The smaller sizes were done at the request of some members so make sure to attend and collect these shirts at the next General Meeting.

CLUB TOOLS ADDITION.

The Club has just taken delivery of a Ducati tool for setting the pickups on the engine case sidecover where Bosch electronic ignition is fitted. This tool will be only available for use at the service days. For dynamic timing of the same model ignition, the Club has also purchased the correct degree wheel and strobe gun. For further details, see Gerard's article in this issue.

ITALY.

Of course the first place I went to in Italy was Bologna and I arrived on a public holiday when everything was shut. However, it does give some time to adjust to the completely more relaxed way of life in Italy as opposed to Germany and learning to organise your life around the 3 hour lunchbreaks.

I saw one Ducati in Bologna (an original 1972 450 Street Scrambler) and a 600TL in Florence and a 650SL in Rome. There are thousands of mopeds all ridden in a crazy manner and it's extremely rare to see a crash helmet. There are a few Cagiva 350 Allazuras around and a surprising number of BMW's and Moto Guzzi's but the trend in Italy is towards Choppers unfortunately.

The next day I took a bus to Borgo Panigale where I was fortunate to be met by Franco Valentini who took me on a thorough tour of the factory and allowed me to take as many photos as I liked. What I found there was full scale production after all the rumours of the factory closing down.

There are hundreds of Pantah motors and production was still continuing on the Mille engines but this is about to finish soon. After the Mille, all Ducati engines will be finished in black.

All casting and machining is done at the factory and it is quite a large operation but with only about 200 workers. Diesel industrial motors and the turbo 200 Alfetta diesel are manufactured side by side with the Pantah. I was impressed with the space and cleanliness.

After assembly, all engines are bench-tested (with clear covers over the rockers) for about an hour.

While I was there, F1 750s and Alluzurras were on the 2 production lines. They are currently doing a run of 1000 F1s and this is a much improved motorcycle for 1986. Forcella Italia forks, white Veglia instruments, new rear suspension unit, improved oil lines, red wheels and larger valves with more power. It shares many features with the new 750 Montjuich. After assembly, all bikes are tested on the tiny test track with a dummy fuel tank and extra battery. However, the number of F1s being built is a lot less than Allazurras. There were hundreds of Alluzurras waiting to be road tested.

After the test, the bikes get a tank, seat and fairing and wait to be shipped out.

I was also extremely fortunate to be able to go to the racing and development room. Here was the Montjuich and last years 750 racers plus lots of motors with reversed cylinder heads. The Paso was here next to the Chopper. Both these bikes have the rear cylinder head reversed to enable air cleaning to be more effective. It was sad to see the Ducati racing division working on a production version of the horrible Chopper rather than the super racers.

It seems that eventually all Ducatis will have reversed cylinder heads.

From the Development room it was up to the spare parts department and here things looked most optimistic. Some items previously unavailable are actually being made again (like 750 Big-end assemblies) and I saw machines forging con-rods for roller bearing Ducatis. They also have huge supplies of stuff for older Ducatis but a lot of it is uncatalogued so not on the new computer system. As always, it was difficult to get any literature or brochures because they don't produce much of it.

Then it was off to lunch with Franco. I had hoped to meet Dr. "T" but he goes home at about 11 o'clock so I was invited back the next day to meet him and sent home in a chauffeur-driven Mercedes.

Having the afternoon spare gave me a chance to check out the Ducati dealership in Bologna. I could only find one Ducati in a shop - an F1 way down the back of the Honda dealership and the genuine Ricambi (spare parts) stocks very little and gets them from the factory the next day. Stracciari has lost his distributorship due to his tie up with Gowanlocks so MVM is the only place where you can get the parts now. There are other sources though, notably Giacomoto (who is the Conti exhaust distributor) has quite a good range of parts as well as tuning equipment. I also went to NCR which is basically just a tuning workshop and they didn't have much really.

The next day it was back to the factory out at Barga-Panigale, another look through the race and development shop and a meeting with Dr. "T" over lunch. He had just been down to Rimini to do some work with Tambourini on the next generation of Pantahs. These will probably be watercooled with 4 valve heads and reversed cylinder heads on the rear will be standardised throughout the range. Sometimes I feel that the new bikes, like the Paso are getting too sanitary for Ducati and away from the pure no-compromise sportster which bikes like the 750 Montjuich represent.

After Bologna, it was up to Varese in Northern Italy near the Swiss border. There I went to Cagiva and was shown around by Sig. Giacometti. The Cagiva factory is a lot smaller and more cramped than Ducati but they make 50,000 bikes a year here compared with 5000 at Bologna. There were hundreds of 125 Elefant trail bikes and 125 MXers and also huge stocks of 350 Allazurras. Frankly, the whole place is not up to the standard of the Bologna factory in terms of equipment and quality. However, I was able to go through the race department where I had a good look at the 1986 500 GP bike and the World Championship winning MXers. This was more impressive. Cagiva spend a lot of money on their racing programme.

The future of Ducati looks quite positive but it doesn't look like there will be any more Milles after 1986 and the Tambourini Mille has been shelved. I think we will see more chopper and trail-bike derivations as these are the new trend in Italy.

But with the prospect of continued spares production and an increase in motorcycles the Cagiva takeover would have to be seen as an advantage. The saddest aspect is that the essence of the Ducati charisma may be lost as the bikes become more and more market oriented, however compared with the news we were hearing a year ago, things look really good for Ducati.

NEXT MONTH : ENGLAND.

Ian Falloon.

STOLEN DUCATI.....STOLEN DUCATI.....STOLEN DUCATI.....STOLEN DUCATI.....

Ducati Mille Hailwood Replica

1985 model, 4000 klms, Metzlers, Reg. No. RR 180
Eng. No. 1006272 DM 1000

\$100 REWARD!!!!!!

ALSO:

Kawasaki GPZ900R A2 1985 model, red / silver, 6000 klms, silver dots,
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Contact Tony Robinson at 246 The Esplanade, Brighton, Vic. 3186. Ph. (03) 592 8585
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RON ANGEL WHOLESALE.

ALL NEW STOCKS JUST ARRIVED.

Two piece quality "Speedmode" Italian Leathers at a realistic price. \$495 & \$475.
Verlicchi 2-into-1 to suit 900s and Pantahs \$295.

Laverda bars \$85.95

F1 and Mille Clipons \$47.95

Super comfort clipons \$59.95

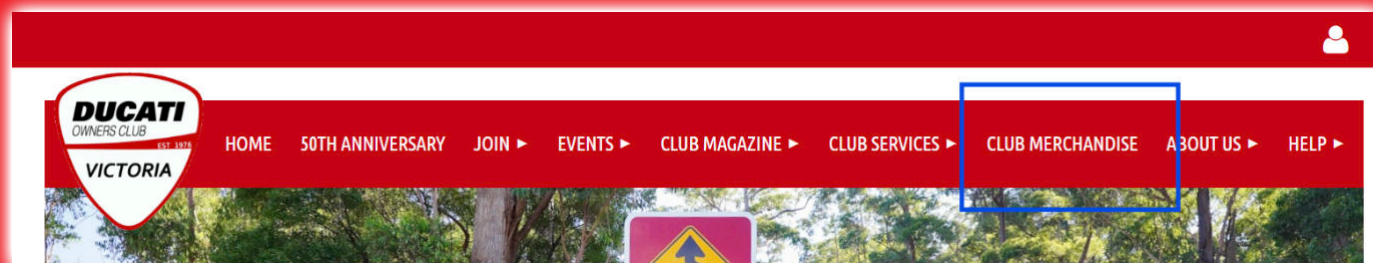
F1, SS, Sport handgrips \$9.95.

PS. I noticed that the Pantah 2-into-1 exhaust was black chrome so the price is very realistic. Also the cost of Laverda bars has gone down since last seen for sale on the parts market.
- ED.

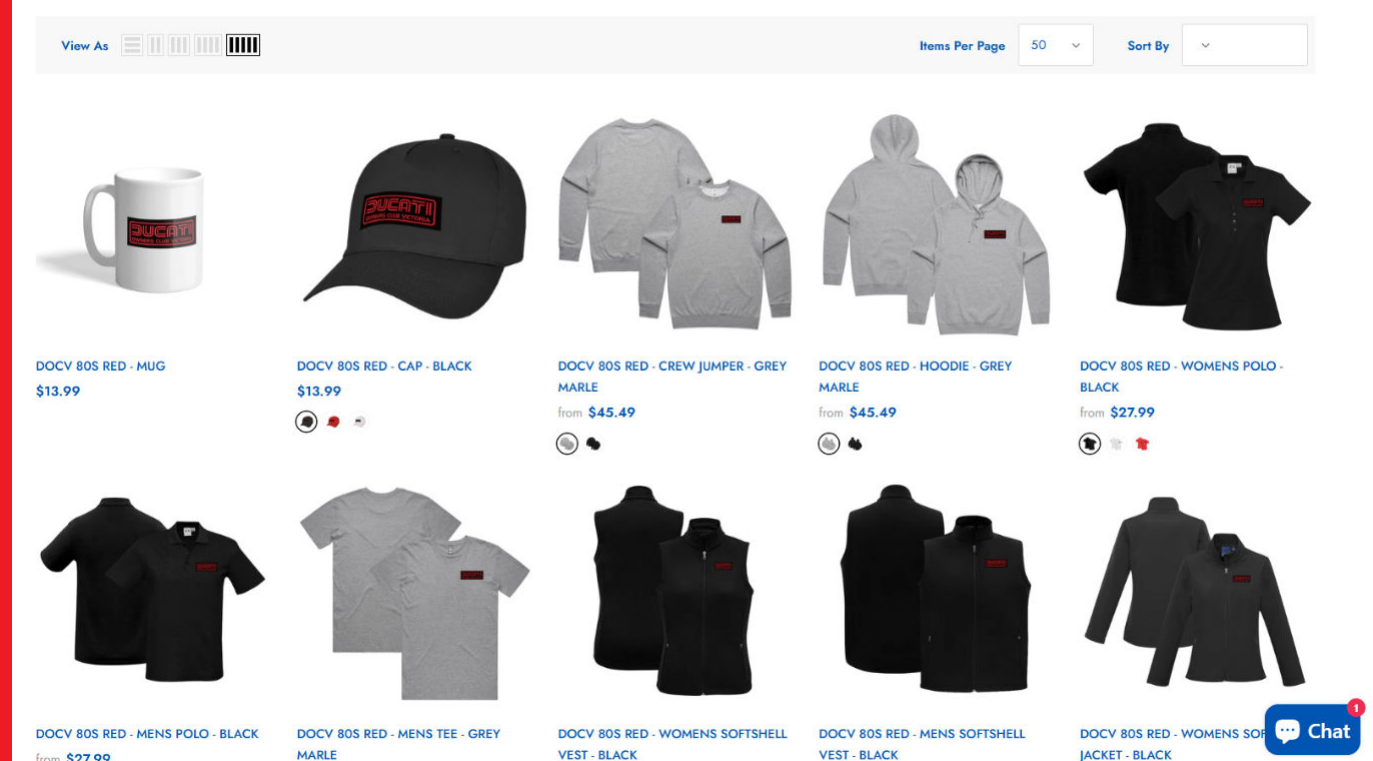
THE DOCV ONLINE STORE IS NOW LIVE!

You can now order custom DOCV merch from our online store. Huge thanks to our merch supplier Forza Italia for hosting the web store and for providing the logistics to make this happen! You can choose from two bright new 50th Anniversary logos, the Modello Eccellente logo, the classic Timing Cover logo, the "Band" logo and the 1980s fuel tank logo.

Go to the club website > top menu > Online Store > and design a t-shirt, cap, polo, vest or jacket!



DOCV 80S RED



CHOOSE YOUR DESIGN



The online store is operated by Forza Italia.

Any enquiries to Forza Italia:

Carlton store: 247-249 Lygon St, Carlton VIC 3053

Phone: 03 9654 6660

Email: info@forzaitalia.com.au

Open: Mon - Sun 11am - 4pm, closed Public Holidays

New Members Welcome

Four new members joined the DOCV recently.

- Owen Anderson
- Marc Debono
- Chris Redman
- John Trang

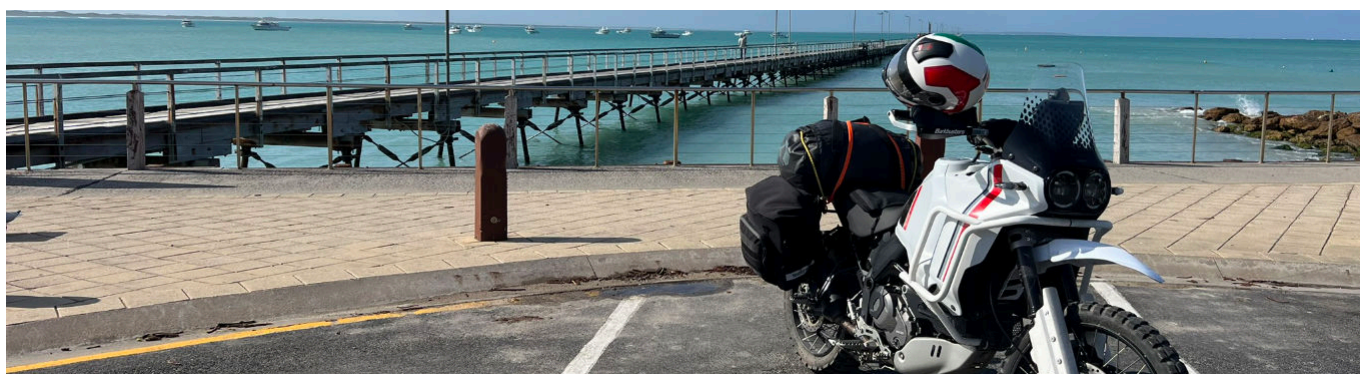
We are very excited to formally welcome you on one of the club rides and the monthly club meeting. Keep an eye out for new rides in the coming months, head to Events -> Rides -> Upcoming Rides on docv.org and register in time as numbers may be restricted for some rides.

The club often host rides specifically for new members. There is no better way to meet other club members and to share your passion and to show off your Italian Masterpiece.

DOCV ONLINE STORE – YEAH, IT WORKS!

Secretary Geraint designed and purchased a soft-shell jacket from the DOCV online store (<https://forzaitalia.com.au/pages/docv>) and these were his comments:

The jacket is true to size, fits well, looks fantastic, and I think it took from memory about two weeks. I'll have to confirm but it came sooner than expected. The order process was simple and streamlined. Too easy.



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book
corner



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\$2¢
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PASS THE TORCH

4 YEARS OF
EPIC RIDES...
WHO'S TAKING
THE LEAD NEXT?



BECOME THE NEXT DOCV RIDE CAPTAIN!

DUCATI OWNERS CLUB OF VICTORIA

OCTOBER SOCIAL MEETING GUEST SPEAKER

Fab Ramunni - European motorcycle tours and Hispania motorcycle tours specifically



Long time club member Fab has done 6 tours with Hispania tours over the last decade and is now their Australian agent. He's ridden through the alps, Italy, Spain and across to the UK. Fab now has a bike stored in Europe so he can do his next tour without having to freight a bike OS.



If you know Fab then you know he's a very genial and engaging fellow – don't miss his talk if you're thinking (or dreaming) of a bike tour in Europe.

COME PIT WITH US - PHILLIP ISLAND, 13 OCTOBER

Joe Rascal Ducati will be at Phillip Island with the Ride Days team on 13 October, and is offering a free pit garage to all Ducati owners who want to come and ride.

Food and drink will be provided, along with support on the day from the Joe Rascal team.

Details and registration: joerascalducati.com.au/pages/event/come-pit-with-us



JOE RASCAL
DUCATI 150-158 MONTAGUE ST
SOUTH MELBOURNE, 3205

JOE RASCAL DUCATI LAUNCHES ITS EVENTS PAGE

Joe Rascal Ducati in South Melbourne has launched a dedicated Events page on its website. It's now the place to RSVP and register your interest in all of their events.

Bookmark it: joerascalducati.com.au/pages/events



**REFER DOCV WEBSITE
FOR THE LATEST DETAILS**
<https://www.docv.org>

UPCOMING RIDES

Keep an eye out for new rides after the winter break, head to Events -> Rides -> Upcoming Rides on docv.org and register in time as numbers may be restricted for some rides.

Remember to arrive with a full tank and arrive a little early for a good coffee, great company and ride briefing, not to mention checking out the super cool bikes!

Sun 18 Oct - Easy Sunday Ride - Neerim South Hotel lunch

Meet 9:30am Beechworth Bakery, Healesville - depart
10am - approx. 300 km - Leader: Neil

Tue 20 Oct - October General Meeting

The Manningham - 6:30pm / 8:00pm - Guest speaker Fab Ramunni

Sat 31 Oct - Mon 2 Nov - Melbourne Cup Weekend 3-Day Ride

9am Platters Cafe, Diamond Creek - Ballarat & Warrnambool, home via the Otways - book own accommodation - Leader: Chris

Thu 5 Nov - A Night with Joe Rascal Racing

Joe Rascal Ducati Melbourne - 7-10pm - SuperX launch - RSVP

Sun 15 Nov - Whittlesea: The Long Way (half day)

10:30am Platters Cafe, Diamond Creek - approx. 100 km - Leader: Chris

Tue 17 Nov - November General Meeting

The Manningham - 6:30pm / 8:00pm

Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov - Dargo Weekend

8:30am The Eating House, Wellington Village, Rowville

Sun 13 Dec - Chris's Murrindindi Meander

9:30am Platters Cafe, Diamond Creek - approx. 300 km - lunch Corner Hotel, Alexandra

Mon 21 Dec - DOCV Christmas Ride

9:30am Butlers Pantry, Rowville - Gippsland

Wed 6 Jan - Venus Bay Vitamin (midweek)

9am Butlers Pantry, Rowville - approx. 400 km - experienced riders

Mon 25 - Wed 27 Jan - Australia Day 3-Day Ride

9am Maccas Pakenham - mostly unsealed - stay Midvalley Motel, Morwell

Sun 7 Feb - Grampians Ride to Remember

Ararat - see article

Register for all rides at docv.org > Events

Riding Etiquette

1. RIDE YOUR OWN RIDE/PACE:

The DOCV has riders of many differing skill levels as we have no minimum standard of skill required to join (other than a valid motorcycle license).

Do not try and follow someone who is riding above YOUR comfortable pace as you may not be able to react to an emergency situation as well as they can. If you are pushing your limits trying to keep up, you are more likely to come to grief and possibly hurt others. The club would rather wait for you than you have an accident.

Know your own limits and ride to them!

2. PETROL:

When meeting in the morning for a ride, you are expected to have a FULL tank of petrol. If one fills up at a servo, we all fill up. Use the lead rider as a guide.

3. CORNER MARKING:

Firstly, the 'Lead' rider and 'Tail End Charlie' (TEC) rider/s, plus any variation to the standard corner making system, are discussed at the riders briefing in the morning. So pay attention!

Upon approaching an intersection or turn-off that moves away from the current route, the lead rider signals to the second rider in the group to stop and wait with their bike clearly pointing in the new direction. Only once all other riders have passed and the TEC arrives may the corner marker move on and so on and so on.

If something needs to be communicated to a corner marker, pull over and TELL them. You NEVER leave the corner till the TEC comes through and the TEC does not pass anyone.

If you pull up at a T intersection and no one is there, STOP. It is easier to phone someone rather than trying to find someone heading in the wrong direction.

When on a big ride with lots of turn-off's the leader rider may pull over to regroup. If he stays on the bike, helmet and gloves on, do the same. It usually means that we'll be continuing shortly.

The second person marking the corner should endeavour to keep the TEC in visual contact at least until they get to the next corner marker at which point the next corner marker is handed responsibility for the safety and guidance of the TEC.

Keep in mind that the TEC of the day may not be as fast as you, may not know the roads like you do, or perhaps is on the phone to the lead-rider discussing some issue up ahead. If you want to chase down Pecco, please wait until after you mark the next corner.

4. OVERTAKING:

Riding in a group can be heaps of fun, but it's also important to remember those around for you. All we ask is that you have consideration for the whole group when riding. If a rider has caught up to you in a twisty section and they have their indicator on they are asking nicely to overtake you, so help them out, move to the left of your lane (if safe to do so) and kick them through. They are most likely quicker and would rather not overtake you in a dangerous spot/manner. And do not race them to the next corner, this is very dangerous and will not be tolerated.

BE PATIENT when you catch up to another rider, especially as they will most likely be letting you through momentarily. Most reckless overtaking moves happen because someone is rushing or trying to keep up.

Most importantly, NEVER overtake on the left of someone in a single lane, only overtake on the right. When overtaking someone within the group don't cut back immediately (if possible) and spray them with stones from the centre of the road. Avoid overtaking other bikes within the group at high speed. They often don't see you coming and it frightens the crap out of them. When passing cars try to avoid overtaking as a group. The lead rider may judge their 'overtake' so that they can pass safely, but it may leave you hung out to dry on the wrong side of the road.

5. FORMATION:

Formation is mostly used in transit sections and is the way everyone rides staggered on alternate sides within a lane, one bike in the right hand wheel track, the other, behind and in the left hand wheel track and so on. For safety, as the speeds rise, so should the gap between riders.

DO NOT ride side by side in the same lane. Keep to your side of the road. Do not move to the other side of the road before a corner (even on unmarked roads), it can lead to accidents from vehicles coming the other way or from someone overtaking you.

6. NEW MEMBERS:

For your first ride, the easiest place to start the day is at the back of the pack, regardless of how good a rider you may think you are. You most likely will have no idea of what people are doing or how fast they are capable of going, so this will save you from getting into a sticky situation.

If you are comfortably keeping up, you can slowly move through the pack till you find someone who rides at the same pace as you, and generally, this will be a good place to stay. Try and avoid overtaking everyone in transit sections if it means holding them up in the next twisty section.



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