

COONA TWO DAY REPORT



Who doesn't love a road trip and that said there were 9 SQTA members who packed up 8 bikes, boots, helmets and gear and headed south west toward the Warrenbungles region of NSW to take part in Coona's first 2 Day Trial. After 9 hours on the road we descended enmasse on "Mannin Grove" olive farm and proceeded to turn Peter and Eva Brocklhurst's house on its head for three nights. Thankfully they took it all in their stride and exhibiting a great deal of patience allowed us to shatter their tranquillity without once being nothing other than the perfect hosts but I bet they breathed a big sigh of relief when they waved us goodbye at sparrows on Monday morning.

This part of NSW is certainly worth paying a visit, with the uniquely shaped Warrenbungles and the Siding Springs Observatory close by, but what better way to experience it than to take in an event at the same time and hats off to Peter, Jason and the rest of the CMCC crew for making it happen, and successfully so. Due to a lack of large numbers of trials enthusiasts in the surrounding region, and we are certain this will only change for the better over time, they have certainly managed to prune down all the peripheral work and organisation it takes to run an event which was refreshing in itself and made SQTA look like a government run over regulated juggernaut in comparison. They manage to do this by only setting 5 sections per event and whilst this seemed a little light on at the start, by running four laps in one direction and four in the opposite direction separated by a one hour lunch break complete with barbeque there was no sense of it being anything other than a full days riding. To add to this they then only have to find five observers and I take my hat off to them for their ingenuity and lateral thinking. It probably has a lot to do with Manxman Peter's background and experience at running events in the Isle of Man more than anything but I'm certain his laid back approach contributes a lot as well. It actually felt like we had travelled to the dark side of the moon (a music pun for those lucky enough to have travelled in my car over the four days ☺) where there was a parallel universe with a club mimicking the SQTA formula and doing it equally successfully albeit on a smaller scale.

Speaking of observing, one of the enduring memories of the weekend will be that of the two girls on their lounge chairs on the back of their tray back ute, complete with umbrella, observing from an elevated position in the comfort of their very own mobile living room. Now if there was ever any doubt about our rider number cardless scoring system it was totally dispelled by this display of country ingenuity. Absolutely gold and thanks girls, along with the others who scored for us over the weekend!

Day two saw a few more riders appear out of the woodwork and with a set of five totally new sections it was back into it again for everyone with the hotly contested Grade 2 riders jockeying for positions and a chance to take home one of the SQTA supplied trophies. The Tamworth family group took full advantage of the day and circulated riding four laps of each section at a time adding a bit of a new twist to it all but most importantly having plenty of fun with daughter Amber sharing her father's bike with her brother and giving trials a go for the very first time and receiving an encouragement award for her efforts.

As for placings, not that any of them really mattered, Kurtis Rogers edged out Adina Reed for first place in Grade 1, John Barwick beat yours truly on a count back in Grade 2 followed by property owner Jason in third and Zac Reed only lost 5 points for the day giving Stuart from Wollongong some incentive to return next year to get the major prize in Grade 3, although he did take home the examiners choice award which was a little perplexing considering there wasn't any machinery examination performed. Don't you just love the way things are done out in the country??

The only negative to come out of the weekend was Denys Reed being beaten by yours truly, which only contributed equal and opposite amounts of satisfaction to my weekend, but aside from that many thanks to the Coona crew for not only putting on a great event for the out of towners but for also making us feel so welcome in the process and we only hope that we can reciprocate whenever you decide to head north to the big smoke where your sister trials club awaits your arrival.

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