BikeBytes

Scottish Motorcycle Club

Volume 8 Issue 1 January 2006 Bbytes0701.doc / .pdf

WELCOME

Welcome to the January edition of BikeBytes and a Happy new year to all. May 2007 be a good year for biking

Paul S Broughton

NEXT MEETING AND EVENTS

Next meeting, Wednesday 10th January 2007 in the Black Bitch, see you all there

Paul S.Broughton

HONG KONG, AUSTRALIA AND SINGAPORE

Fiona and I spent November visiting Australia, calling in at Hong Kong on the way out and Singapore on the way home. Here are some brief comments on our trip. Several of you may also have been to these places (as I have been before) and may have different impressions. We'd like to hear them. You can view a selection of the many photographs I took on my Photobox website at http://www.photobox.co.uk/album/4660781. They are not all strictly biking related but may nevertheless be of interest:

Hong Kong: 409 - 456

Australia: 492 - 730

Singapore: 748 - 781

Hong Kong: Hong Kong is a fantastic combination of colour, banners, colonial-style buildings, department stores, trams, double-decker buses like ours, side streets absolutely packed with stalls and shops spilling onto the pavement selling (and actually making) all kinds of goods, and incredibly efficient organisation at the airport and of the public transport. The famous streets were clean and impressive. The side streets were quite clean too and fascinating but you could pass through some pretty bad smells! You could not fail to notice the many statues and memorials to the many and *mainly* Scots who started out to make what Hong Kong has become today. It's amazing to see the amount of trade and commercial activity that's made Hong Kong famous as an entrepreneurial entrepôt still developing. Huge ships seemingly overloaded with of containers several storeys high queue up in the vast harbours, each awaiting its turn to unload and reload in the busy docks before hurrying off to sea again. They spend most of their time at sea.

There are so many restaurants and cafés catering for all kinds of clientèle and tastes. There are huge numbers of tourists, mostly and surprisingly from China, being shown around. Many of the buildings are very tall (we were on the 29th floor of our hotel), modern, impressive and differing whilst fitting in very well but many ex-colonial buildings have been well preserved and protected. Meanwhile some people (whole families) still live all their lives on boats in the harbour, as they always have done.

Most bikes were small capacity two-strokes but there were many of them. I came across a street that had been closed off for a motorcycle exhibition with various stands. I took some rather nice photographs of the ***very*** nice young Chinese models!

Australia: We were in Sydney, the south-east of Victoria and in Melbourne. The 'welcome' at Sydney airport was rude, confusing and *unwelcoming*. The city is impressive and busy but the people seemed dour. Melbourne was also very impressive but there the people are most friendly and helpful, often stopping to ask if we needed directions when we were just looking at our street map! Large parts of south of Victoria are desperately short of water - a seven-year drought continues - and they can't water their gardens, except using waste water, such as after washing up dishes. Vast areas are extremely dry with dead grass and shrivelled trees - and summer hadn't even started. Everywhere they are really very concerned about the situation and climate change - which prompted the theme for January's Prize Crossword Competition. Since we came home, many bush fires are burning out of control. But there were greener hillier areas further south.

If you look at the photographs, you'll see a pretty and chatty Taiwanese girl on the train, my nephew on a bike, me on a bike, a couple from the Swiss (KTM) Adventure Club (notice the girl's T-shirt "AUSTRALIA 16,776km - It's a bloody long way"), peering through a fence at Phillip Island (our host said we had "no time to go in"!), a helpful road-sign for bikers, a friendly Police Motorcyclist in Melbourne who was happy to chat. I'd seen hundreds of bikes parked on

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pavements all over the city and he confirmed that it was legal to park a motorcycle on a pavement as long as it didn't cause an obstruction - so on the pavement between trees lining an avenue was OK, for example. This ruling must surely encourage biking commuters and ease car congestion, and seems not to pose any problem at all. We need that ruling! There were many commuting bikes, especially in Melbourne, but most tended to be sports bikes often ridden with bare arms and without gloves, some cruisers but very few all-rounders.

Back to the photographs, I came across two guys (one on a Yamaha YZF R1, one on a Suzuki GSX R), part of the Great Ocean Road, and an amazing display of kite-surfing (para-surfing) - notice all the other kites in the background!

Singapore: Much the same as Hong Kong in terms of colour, history and British/Chinese tradition mixed with modern Chinese/British business flair and amazing efficiency but very clean. Friendly too (sweeties on offer by immigration officers at the airport - "Welcome to Singapore, have a nice stay!"). Compare that with Sydney (or maybe even London).

No bikes in the photographs but notice street scenes, colour, side street stalls, architecture, etc.

Overall: I love Hong Kong and Singapore! The evidence of commercial enterprise is all around. That and the effort they are putting into tourism make our activities look pathetic. I have no desire whatever to emigrate to Australia! It's great to visit these places but it was lovely to return to Edinburgh, the Capital, the Centre of the Universe and our own home!

Best wishes to you and your family for a Guid Ne'er! Ride well, ride safely and have *fun!*

Arthur Shepherd

FLOW AND RIDING ENJOYMENT

Why do we ride bikes? The answer generally is enjoyment, but why is riding a bike so enjoyable. Current research, due to be published early this year, suggests that it is very enjoyable because a rider gets into a state of flow – but what is flow?

Csikszentmihalyi, in his theory of flow, describes the state as being "*the holistic sensation that people feel when they act in total involvement*" When a person is in a flow state their full concentration is on the task at hand, such as riding. This concentration is so intense that there is no attention left over for anything irrelevant or to worry about problems. Flow is often interpreted by riders as the feeling of 'Freedom'.

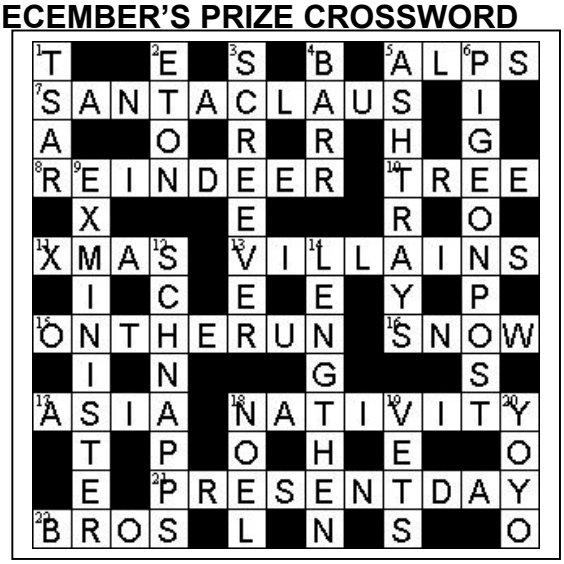
The theory of flow describes four conditions based on an interaction between a person's skills and the challenge that they are using these skills to face.

When a person has a low skill level, and is faced with a low challenge, then an apathetic attitude results but with a high skill and the same low challenge there is a shift from apathy to boredom. A high challenge that outstrips skill level results in anxiety often interpreted as risk. However, when a rider matches his level of skill to the challenge presented by the road, then the flow state can be entered into. When a person enters a state of flow their concentration is purely on the task in hand; because this concentration is so intense the task becomes automatic and effortless, being executed without effort and to the best of the person's ability. When in flow a person can become so involved that they lose sense of self and time distorts. The experience becomes intrinsically rewarding. So next time you are out having a really good ride, you may just be in flow.

		Skill Level	
		Low	***High***
Challenge	***Low***	***Apathy***	***Boredom***
	High	***Anxiety***	***Flow***

Paul Broughton

HERE IS THE SOLUTION TO DECEMBER'S PRIZE CROSSWORD



The November Prize Crossword Puzzle attracted three entries, all of which were complete and correct. The lucky prize-winners for October and November haven't been drawn yet because the Black Bitch was closed in November and we had our Fun Night in December. They will be drawn later.

Arthur Shepherd

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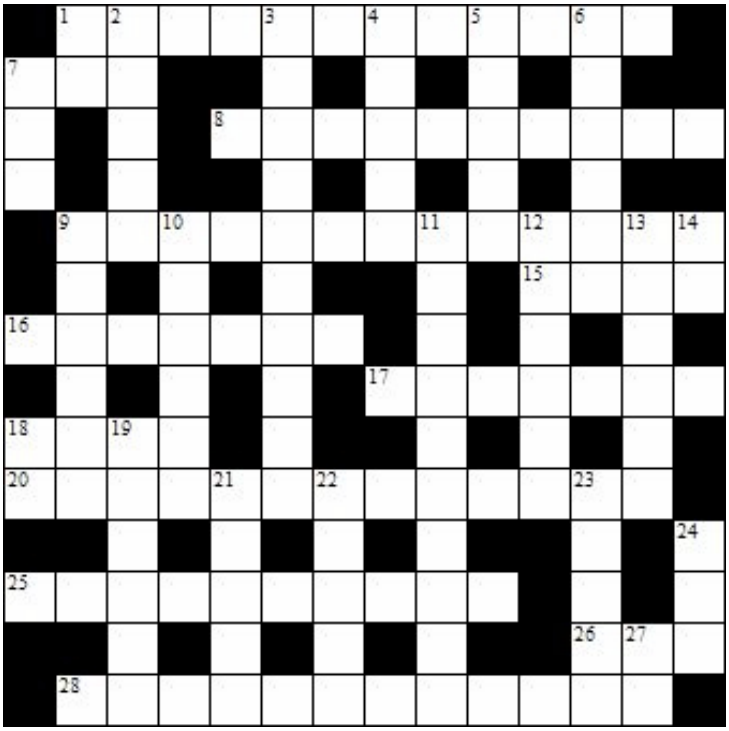
Scottish Motorcycle Club
January PRIZE CROSSWORD



Crossword and Clues compiled by Arthur Shepherd.

Having just returned from Australia, where everyone seems extremely concerned about global warming, the long-term droughts (seven years in parts of Victoria where we were) and consequent severe water restrictions with summer not even started, I thought I would include references to that in this month's Crossword. There are, of course, biking bits and references to girls.

Old Fine Art

Across

1 Action taken to preserve the natural world for *9 Across* reasons (12)
7 Bob Crawley offers them (3)
8 In great difficulties - and not just in the Australian Bush (2, 1, 3, 4)
9 To do with the natural surroundings (13)
15 Settle onto a comfy saddle; or after a while lessen the pressure at a comfort stop (4)
16 Say or do again without the initial need of the Royal Engineers and, not being unwell, able to read (7)
17 To do with the scientific study of plants (7)
18 Hebridean island where St Columba founded a monastery, which has a 13th Century abbey, and was the burial ground of Scottish, Irish and Norwegian kings (4)
20 More efficient way of getting petrol into cylinders and reducing exhaust emissions (4, 9)
25 Painting hanging in a church behind the centre of worship (10)

Across (Cont)

26 Friendly gesture to a passing biker done without taking your hands off the bars (3)
28 Someone who looks after and collects tolls at a crossing over a river, etc (12)

Down

1 In the event that; whether (2)
2 Comprising 70% of Earth's surface, with concerns about rising levels and pollutants (5)
3 Termination; breathing out (10)
4 One who eats no food of animal origin (5)
5 Frenchman for "fallen"; French grave (5)
6 The time we expect to get there (3, 1, 1, 1)
7 Useful paper aid for finding your way (3)
9 "Oh, you really are so gorgeous I could ...!" (3, 3)
10 Of words (upset stomach not required!) (6)
11 Our favourite, environmentally friendly vehicle (10)
12 Language or person of a land-locked Himalayan country (6)
13 To transfer (property) to another (6)
14 Velocette's quiet, water-cooled, hand-start, hand-change motorcycle model (1, 1)
18 In the event that; whether (2)
19 Drink of the Greek and Roman gods; raw material of honey (6)
21 Dressed in a primary colour, she is 'The Lady ....' (2, 3)
22 Liquid extracted from cells; petrol *coll* (5)
23 Gas protecting life on Earth from UV and rapidly diminishing due to pollution (5)
24 Undeveloped shoot (3)
27 Word linking alternatives in a sentence (2)

Write your name here: .....

Send the completed puzzle (or your best attempt if you can't quite finish it) before the end of the month for entry into the £10 prize draw to:

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