

SolexOz

SEPTEMBER 2012 NEWSLETTER

NEWS

RECENT EVENTS, MELBOURNE

The SolexOz September Run took place on Sunday 23rd, after a cold wet winter. Everyone had been looking forward to a bit of spring weather. Neil's run from Smythesdale outside Ballarat to Skipton on the Hamilton Highway was a great ride, mostly on the recently up-graded rail trail. This was a challenging ride of about 65 kilometers round trip with some beautiful scenery. Although we battled strong headwinds on the outbound journey the return trip was a real buzz. Morning tea was at Linton and the group enjoyed a great lunch at Skipton.

The weather forecast was marginal on the day prior and we woke up to forecast showers and wind, this put off some of the punters but for most of the run we had sunshine and only a few showers in the last few kilometers prior the end of the run.

The doubtful weather kept the numbers low but those who participated were rewarded with a great ride. Photos of this run can be found on our last page, thanks to Alex.

Participants were: Neil on the Trojan, John on his Sparta, Geoff on the 1700 with Alex, Frank, and Jurgen on 3800's. Apologies came from Joe, Ern, Don, Tiby, Andrew and Frances.

COMING EVENTS, OCTOBER NIGHT RUN

Don's Descent into Darkness Run (aka "Don's Party") will take place on Friday October 12. Don has put together this exciting evening run starting at 6.30pm and riding along the Gardner Trail to Maison Scutt for a fun get-together and BBQ, at Dusk we will complete the return journey with a possible beautiful sunset the "Descending into Darkness and home.



Full details will be sent out next week, in the meantime, please check that your lighting is up to scratch or maybe purchase some cheap auxiliary lights from Big W, K-Mart, or Aldi.

THE RISK OF USING NON-ORIGINAL SOLEX PARTS

In recent times, we have had a few members purchasing non-standard Solex parts from overseas sellers that promise all sorts of performance improvements. In some instances these go-fast parts have made some improvement but more often than not there has been no improvement or worse still the motor ran badly or even failed totally as a result.

It would appear that when Solex developed our bikes they got things pretty well right first time round and continued to improve performance incrementally with each successive model.

Some of our members have found 40-year-old Solexes with little or no kilometres on them since new and they go as fast as any bikes in our club. Keeping your Solex standard is often best; if it is a bit slow maybe all it needs is a tune or rebuild not serious modifying.

One of our members recently purchased a pair of "Go Fast Gaskets", a cylinder head and base gasket made from very thin copper compound material about the thickness of a piece of paper. The selling point was to improve Cylinder and Crankcase pressure? After fitting the performance was little improved and then continued to deteriorate until it broke down completely. I was asked to look into why the Solex was running badly and found the following problems:

- When attempting to start the motor I could hear a tapping noise that turned out to be the de-compressor hitting the top of the piston, when the cylinder head was removed there was serious punch mark on the piston head that would have eventually lead to piston failure.
- Around the underside of the head, I found carbon and soot marks that indicated a blown gasket.
- As I tried to remove the copper gasket, it broke up into many pieces after it had only a few kilometres running.
- The Cylinder Base gasket also failed not long after and found to be another of these paper thin go fast gaskets.

The "improved gaskets" not only failed to stand up to the seller's claims but also created other problems with the original design as follows:

- The idea behind the thinner head gasket is to improve Cylinder head pressure but as can be see from the above, is not necessarily the correct way of achieving this. It is better to have a small amount shaved off the head (just under 1mm) and use a standard size head gasket for better sealing and reliability.
- The idea of a thinner base gasket is to improve crankcase pressure??? Sounds good but lowers the Cylinder but not the piston height. This ultimately changes the porting heights that no longer match up, affecting timing and resulting in less performance not more.

The two most common and proven performance improvements are to shave a bit of the head as mentioned above and open up the inlet port to approximately 8.5mm, The inlet port was originally restricted by the manufacturer to limit speed in the 1950's and 60's so as to comply with some overseas rules of the period.

Before carrying out any "go fast" improvements, it is often wise to talk to our experts and learn from their experience (and mistakes). They can tell you some of the pitfalls and more importantly, what works and what does not. Best not to try and re-invent the wheel and stuff up at the same time. One of the benefits of our club is the technical advice that is always freely available, so do not hesitate ask. Call Neil, Ern or Geoff anytime you need help or advice.



**PHOTOS OF THE SEPTEMBER SMYTHESDALE TO SKIPTON RUN
KINDLY SUPPLIED BY ALEX**



Time for a stop and chat



Neil about to start No. 1 on the grid



A stop on the old trestle bridge



Geoff enjoying the pleasures of his 1700



Beautiful bush trails around Linton



Neil and Geoff sucking on real old style Milk Shakes

See you all on our night run in October, regards, SolexOz