

60c

# cyclE

APRIL '75

AUSTRALIA

**BULTACO ALPINA**  
**TRIALS OR**  
**ENDURO?**

**TRAIL**  
**RIDING**  
**PLACES**  
**IT'S**  
**LEGAL**



**WIN A**  
**KAWASAKI**  
**250**

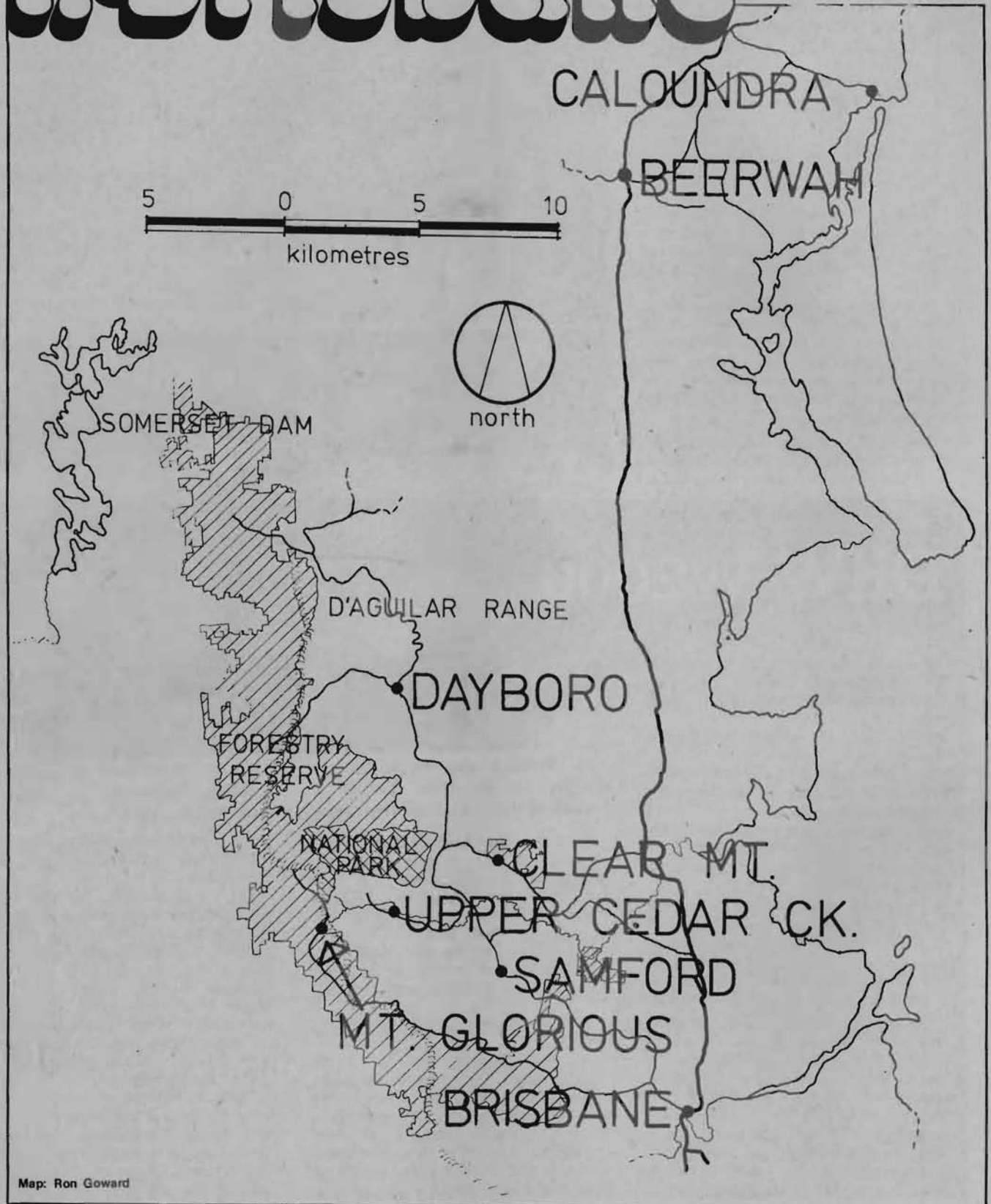
**50**  
**GREAT**  
**PRIZES**  
**TO BE**  
**WON!**



**FIRST**  
**RIDE**  
**DKW ROTARY**  
**SUZUKI'S**  
**70 BHP 750!**



# 1. Brisbane



Map: Ron Goward

An open arm welcome for trail riders? Huge variety of terrain? Only 10 km from the city centre? That's Mount Glorious, the Sunshine State's off-road Eldorado.

THE LAST TIME you went trail riding one of three things probably happened:

1. You got warned off by police/ forestry rangers and were generally disillusioned about the apparent discrimination against trailsters.

2. You rode 150 kilometres (or if you're lucky drove with the bikes on a trailer) and felt like the day was half over before you even got to throw a leg over.

3. You went to the property of a friend who is officially registered as a primary producer and spent the day playing about over logs, around trees and through the one creek until you knew the area well enough to become a cartographer.

But when was the last time you rode 20 kilometres from home and joined a trail that kept you busy all day without retracing your tracks? If you can answer "last weekend" to that question then it's a good bet you live in Brisbane. For just north-west of the Sunshine City at Mt. Glorious is a 70 kilometre long strip of State forestry land that provides days of great trail riding . . . and better still, you're allowed to ride there!

Actually, you need a permit to ride there, but permits are free and there are few conditions attached to their issue.

● You must have a motorcycle licence and be able to produce it.

You must own a registered motorcycle and be able to produce the registration papers.

● You must not light fires in the forest (in other words, take sandwiches).

● You must not leave existing forestry roads and trails.

● You must not exceed 40 km/ h. This last is not as much a restriction as it sounds since on all but the main arterial trail 40 km/ h is plenty fast enough. In any case, I have yet to encounter a radar trap in the middle of a rain forest.

The permit can be obtained from a certain Mr. King in the Forestry Commission in Brisbane. He's on the fourth floor of a five-storey building opposite St. John's Cathedral in Ann Street. The affable Mr. King can also supply you with up to date maps and, if Mt. Glorious starts to get jaded, he'll talk about giving you a permit to ride in other places, like Clear Mountain.



Top: Richard rests before the onslaught on the hills. Terrain is typical of the Mount Glorious area.

Clear Mountain has two areas which, although small, provide great opportunities for novice riders. The area around the actual mountain is quite challenging and good country for learning all about your TY250, while another area nearby has some nice easy trails and creeks to practise standing up and falling down.

## Mt. Glorious

But Mt. Glorious . . . ah, sweet verdant trails! Your permit allows you to ride anywhere in the forestry area from a point five kilometres north of Mt. Nebo township. South of this is the catchment area for the Enoggera reservoir and therefore taboo to bikes. But from this point north (excepting a

Above: Richard (foreground) and Roger recovering . . . "the best water in Australia".

small area of National Park beyond the Mt. Glorious township) it's open on open trails.

For most of the area the fourth condition mentioned (about not leaving existing trails) is superfluous, since the jungle is so thick you could spend a day with a machete and only advance a hundred metres. There are some creeks which look inviting, but it's best not to yield to their temptation as there are other places nearby where you can play at being Chris Leighfield (I'll tell you where shortly).

The area of really dense rain forest near the Malala National Park is indescribably beautiful and very much alive. Various types of forest have their characteristic sound. There is the still, hot rustle of the open Australian bush.

There is the absolute still and deathly hush of a man-made forest of slash pine. Here is the ultimate contrast — the noisy vitality of the Queensland rain forest.

The first time I rode through this jungle I was startled three times in the space of as many kilometres by wallabies lunging out of the lantana as if ejected from a coil spring and then vanishing into the philodendrons on the other side of the trail. But to really appreciate the atmosphere you must leave the two-stroke and take a quiet walk around. Within seconds you're wondering how an exhaust note could be heard above the racket of parrots, cicadas, crickets and other fauna.

Having a rest also gives you time to cast a critical eye at the foliage. Huge, broad-leafed Calladiums thrust up everywhere. The largest have leaves a metre long and half as broad. The deep, green philodendrons make the specimen I have at home seem like a seedling. These are sometimes as tall as a man, with huge leaves like cupped human hands except a hundred times as large.

But too much nature study can convert a trail rider into a biologist and one must resist that to discover the trails. Of these there are thousands, stretching in a long labyrinth as far as

Somerset Dam. For the most part the trails are in reasonable condition.

The gradients are frequently taxing for under 250 cm<sup>3</sup> machines, and the downhill are equally difficult if you're riding a heavy 350. There are creeks to ford, narrow, loose trails to hill-climb along, and gravel surfaced corners to slide around.

A word of caution here, though. It's not motocross country. So if charging around blind corners at 100 km/h is your bag, don't try it here (I'll suggest somewhere else presently), for every now and then you'll come across some Neanderthal truck grinding away at its full tilt of ten km/h. A truck loaded with 100 tonnes of timber takes up all the road and then some, and it takes quite a bit of avoiding at 100 km/h.

### Danger spot

My last foray into this trail riding Paradise underlined just how diverse this area is and also how potentially dangerous the sport is. Roger, aboard his sparkling Bultaco Alpina; Richard, on a Kawasaki 250; and I, astride a Kawasaki 350 courtesy of Gregg Hansford Motorcycles, set off one recent Saturday morning.

**Left: Typical trail country: mountain goats and cycles only. Right: The road up the mountain is in reasonable shape.**

It was my intention to show some of this countryside to Roger and Richard, who did not believe there was any good trail riding "within a hundred miles". The temperature was in the thirties as we fired up the machines at the foot of the mountains and as we rode into the thick jungle the humidity climbed to oppressive levels. It was to be a simple morning's jaunt, so we took no supplies apart from a couple of tools and plugs.

After an hour or so sliding around corners and following a trail until it petered out in a mass of cobwebs and large stones, I espied a promising fire break off to the left. Racing after Roger, I recommended my discovery to him. The three of us about-turned and sped along the two metre wide fire trail, Roger in front, Richard behind. Soon we encountered some "whoop-de-doo's" and as Roger leapt over the first I wound up the 350. Three or four of these hillocks in quick succession had me delirious with delight when, suddenly, Roger, then about 20 metres in front, disappeared from sight.

Not quite sure where he had gone, yet certain I was travelling too fast to take the corner he had apparently found, I hauled on all the stoppers (including my size 8½ left boot), and came to a dusty stop at the top of a vast hill. Richard, who had been a self-

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proclaimed learner on over 100 cm<sup>3</sup> trail bikes, came to a rather more spectacular stop. His technique has since been classified as the Five Point Landing Slide — the five points being handlebars, right footpeg, left knee, left elbow, and left rear cheek (not necessarily all at once).

"D'you reckon you can get back up this hill?" Roger asked from 20 metres down the slope. Aren't Bultaco riders smug sometimes? "I'll give 'er a go," I responded. I moved off without confidence and Richard, who had never tried hills and frankly didn't know about them, followed me. It was almost a sheer drop, and I was not too proud to flick the kill switch and coast down using the clutch for extra braking.

We felt the trail must go somewhere, as it looked in such good condition, but after dropping down five incredibly steep slopes in succession, I suggested to Roger that perhaps we were reaching the point of no return. He volunteered to carry on and see if he could see a way out.

A quarter of an hour later we heard the Alpina returning. There was no way out. Roger was making heavy weather of it, and I wondered how the Kawasakis would perform in terrain that was made-to-measure for the Bultaco. As it turned out the machines performed splendidly; the riders (or more particularly one rider — me) did



not. We struggled up one of the five hills, paused for a rest and began to wish for a drink of water. Not being one for sitting around, I said I was off and set to the next hill.

The Kawasaki really only has two shortcomings as a trail bike. It is overloaded with road-going pizzaz (indicators, headlight, instruments, et al), and damping, especially in the forks, is poor — good enough for most things, but too bouncy for slow riding or steep hills. With the rotary disc valve delivering more torque at lower revs than any other trail bike I can think of (the over-enthusiastic bounce in the front can provide some most spectacular endoes on steep hills).

The hill I was climbing was distinguished by a dog-leg half-way up, across which a fallen branch about as thick as a man's leg lay. Over-compensating for the poor damping I backed off and found myself needing first gear. Three-quarters of the way up I discovered first gear was too much for the rear Trials Universal and it lost all traction, digging a hole and threatening to dump me off the back. The bike and I slithered down ten metres before we came to a halt and, killing the engine, I lay panting for breath and wishing again we had brought some water.

Roger and Richard arrived five minutes later, assuming (from all the revving noises) that I had made it over the top. The Alpina scrambled past and the 250 suffered a similar fate to mine. We got it up with the regulation pushing and grunting and then, after lying about in a heap for a while, went after the 350.

I kicked it over. It was deader than a taxidermist's parrot. As I kicked and kicked, an unpleasant wave of nausea overcame me and I was sure I was about to faint. I lay down and felt a bit better, yet everytime I sat or stood up I had to lay down again almost immediately.

I must have contracted heat exhaustion. It became evident that I wasn't about to ride a dinky, let alone the non-too-light 350, up the hills. After much struggling and relaying riders, and then a final attempt by me to ride the Kawasaki (which Roger finally got going), I stood the bike against a tree, took out the key, and staggered up the track to the top. Our hill-climbing episode had taken two hours; we had covered about three hundred metres.

Richard pillioned me back down the main trail, where we succumbed to the cool waters of a mountain stream.

"The best water in Australia," suggested Roger. We agreed. All of us had suffered from the folly of not taking elementary precautions, even just for "a morning's jaunt"

The next day we retrieved the bike. Some would-be thief had dragged the ponderous machine a third of the way

up the slope. Doubtless he gave up with the idea of buying a copy of the ignition key. I hope he didn't spend too much time on Monday looking for the Kawasaki.

## Fast riding

Well, where does one go for fast trailing? Try riding out to the coast from Beerwah, on the road north to the Sunshine Coast. You'll discover tracks cut through the sand for kilometre after kilometre. The ground is open and kept low by grazing cattle and the trail rider with a penchant for speed can slide away with a two kilometre view in any direction.

After the sandy trail bit you might try bashing up the old Beerwah to Caloundra road. This trail, which can be covered in about an hour if you're in a hurry, is one of my favourites, offering some fast riding, tight corners, a couple of split log bridges (don't try them too fast first time) and (provided you keep to the original road and don't venture up into the hills) a spot where the road has been washed away by a seasonal stream. Half an hour spent planning trails sections and then trying to ride them is most rewarding.

## Trials terrain

Now to fulfil my earlier promise to those of you with a fondness for near-vertical cliffs and rocky streams. Upper Cedar Creek. This is quite near Mt. Glorious, but can only be reached by leaving the forest and heading south of Dayboro or north of Samford. The turn-off follows Upper Cedar Creek for about ten kilometres and it has always been my ambition to ride down the stream rather than the road. It probably is possible, although even Mick Andrews would be unlikely to "clean" it.

Near the source, the creek flows over smooth rocks covered in super-slippery green slime. If you want to learn bike balance, here's a great place to start.

Further on the creek's sandy bottom is studded with rocks up to half a metre high. Picking your way between these will sharpen up the reflexes, especially since too much lock buries the front wheel in the sand and forward progress is severely impeded. There are trees to dodge and mini-waterfalls to negotiate.

But, please, make sure your bike is quiet. Although the locals at nearby farms have not said anything on the few occasions I've taken Gregg Hansford's TY up the creek, they may become vocal if a gaggle of MX-ers arrives replete with friends and support vehicles. So ... keep Upper Cedar Creek open for lone motorcyclists or

couples on well-muffled trials bikes.

That any metropolis the size of Brisbane can support trail riding areas so large and close to town may seem remarkable to southern two-wheelers. It is a result of the long sightedness of our State Forestry Commission in retaining large tracts of difficult country and its current beneficence towards trail riders and recreationalists. It remains imperative that trail riders (local and visitors) do not abuse the good nature of the Forestry Commission. Too many weekend adventurers essay into forestry land without permits and risk, not only a \$200 fine, but the possibility of future exclusions against motorcyclists.

The list of lost trail riding areas close to the city is still small — Mt. Gravatt, Ferny Hills, Bunya State Forest. Three forestry rangers dressed like bus drivers but riding Honda XL350s patrol forestry areas, so hopefully the inconsiderate will be caught before the rest of us suffer. In the meantime, around Brisbane you can have a great time in serious trail riding.

By the way, I've mentioned just a few spots. When you go for your permit, ask Mr. King to show you the others. ●