



newsletter

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TWISTING THROTTLE Australia by Mike Hyde

Harper Collins 2007

Reviewed by Lance Nixon

THE THOUGHT OF RIDING a motorcycle around the perimeter of Australia has always been a fascinating idea. The base point has been the North or South Island of Aotearoa. In one way or another I have been around the edge of both islands. But what about the North Island and South Island of Ossie???

That is what Mike Hyde (aka Mr. Throttle) did. He rode alone, musing inside his helmet for 17,350 kilometres, in 35 days, and lived to tell the tale. Yes, both islands - the big 'un and the wee 'un - felt his Suzuki VStrom's tyres. In fact the back tyre gave a final gasp a long way from a motorcycle shop, so getting the wheel to a town big enough to have a bike shop for a replacement was a tale within the tale.

There was his iPod with a heap of music that he will never want to hear again as his only on-road companion. That left a lot of time to muse. The people he met became fascinating cameos of the encounter. Bless him, there is even a sheep joke. You see, our man is a Kiwi. For that reason he had to offer a few translations of the local Ocker dialect.

The writing style is laced with laid back understated dry humour. He takes the reader from his musing and reflecting, back to the incident that triggered that reflecting. Its a clever two steps forward one step back approach. It works wonderfully well.

The chapters all start with a map of Australia & Tasmania

showing the full route, and as the route is traversed, the line changes colour. It is another way of showing where he was and where his is and where he will be: two steps forward and one step backwards. And each chapter ends with a summary of distance, and the cost of fuel and food and drink consumed. Both are great concepts for making this tale uniquely written.

It would be difficult to read this book without picking up an atlas as soon as you finish. Let it fall open on any page, and you will instinctively begin to look for a ride of a lifetime. It must have had a positive effect on Mike. He has his atlas open at the one showing USA. There is no stopping this man.

Tailpiece

I sent a copy of this wee article to the publishers, asking that they pass it on to Mike. Within 24 hours I had a response from Mike. How good was that!!!

He thanked me for the article and looks forward to seeing it the BMWORoNZ mag. He said, "*So thanks again Lance, your email has made my weekend & if it's published in the OR I can't tell you how much I appreciate it*".

Mike even offered to send me a fridge magnet. Why a fridge magnet, I hear you ask? You'd better get a copy of his book and all will be revealed.



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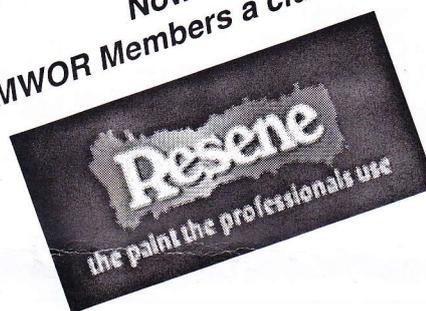
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