

## My First Road Bike.

By the time I purchased my first pure road bike I had already owned several dirt bikes from the same manufacturer. In Warwick in the early 1970s there was only one fair dinkum motorcycle dealer and that was Bob Campbell's East Warwick Garage. Bob was also the RACQ agent in Warwick and in direct competition with my father for towing jobs in the area. This made it interesting at home because once I started racing scrambles it was on a Suzuki and I spent many/every Saturday afternoon out at Morgan Park practicing and quite a few Sundays racing at the various tracks in S.E. Queensland.

After leaving school at the end of 1972 it was time to go to college to do my teaching course and racing bikes was changed to trail riding. I then purchased a TC125 and fitted a Basani chamber to ride in the mountains followed by a TS400J and then an Ossa Explorer.

Then one day while working during the holidays I saw a T500R for sale in a local car dealership. In Warwick the T500 had a reputation as being indestructible with tales of unburstable engines and good handling, by the standards of the day. I scrapped together the negotiated price of \$500 and took possession of the bike. It ran out of fuel on the way back home and I was too broke to put fuel in it. While it was parked in the workshop it was spotted by my father who enquired of the foreman, "Who owns this bloody coffin on two wheels?" The foreman told him that it was mine, you could have heard the verbal explosion a block away. The old man found me coming to the centre of the storm as I didn't want the foreman to bear the brunt of his obvious rage. Once he stopped swearing I explained that it was a bargain and that I had negotiated a very good deal from the car dealer. His rage turned to something else once I had told him the full story and that was the last time he ever objected to my riding on the road.

The Titan was stock with 3000 miles on the odometer and being in a position to modify it I proceeded to do a bit of a café racer job on it. I fitted a set of low bars, removed the indicators, and fitted a small Lucas styled taillight and a bikini fairing. This was followed later by a paint job using a Toyota Celica dark green metallic paint colour.

The bike looked pretty good and it proved to be a reliable bike that I road backwards and forwards from Toowoomba and Warwick each week. It never broke down and was comfortable.

Then one day I got to ride a Bultaco Metralla and I was hooked on the light weight and superb handling and brakes. The Titan went on the market and I sold it for a lot more than I paid for it. I got enough to buy a brand new Metralla MKII. I purchased it through Bob Campbell who worked it out with Don Newell. Once it arrived in the Bob's workshop the top end was blue printed, and it proved to be a great bike for the windy roads that were to be found in the S.E. corner.

So that was my first road bike. My first teaching post was to Cunnamulla and the Metralla was left in Warwick and I took a Sherpa out west.

It wasn't until I was transferred back to Warwick that I resumed riding road bikes. The Metralla was dusted off and was used occasionally. My next road bike was CX500 Honda, but that's another story.