

ALMOST 100 RIDERS WILL START 2015 DJ RUN FOR PRE-1937 MOTORCYCLES



Velocette enthusiast and six times winner of the DJ Rally, Kevin Robertson, on his immaculate 1936 500cc Velocette MSS will be a strong contender for overall honours again this year.

A field of almost 100 riders on pre-1937 motorcycles will set off from Hillcrest, outside Durban in KwaZulu-Natal from 06h00 on Friday, March 6, on the 2015 Durban-Johannesburg commemorative regularity rally. The two-day, international event will have an overnight stop in Newcastle and finish at the Classic Motorcycle Club's clubhouse in Germiston from 15h45 on Saturday.

"We had over 100 entries, but this has dropped back to 97 after some late withdrawals," said clerk of the course Ian Holmes, who heads up an organising team made up of members of a various clubs under the overall umbrella of the Vintage and Veteran Club.

This annual DJ Rally commemorates the original motorcycle road race between these two cities which was staged between 1913 and 1936, the year in which the authorities banned racing on public roads on the grounds of safety. Therefore only motorcycles manufactured up to December 31 1936 may participate in the 2015 DJ Run.

The overseas entries this year include well-known international motorcycling journalist Mike Scott, a columnist for Simon Fourie's Bike SA. Durban-born Scott moved to the UK in the mid-1970's and has been there ever since. He will ride Fourie's 1936 R12 BMW which has completed the DJ Rally many times with Fourie himself at the controls. Fourie and Sharon Kell, of Bike SA, will provide support and encouragement to the visiting rider.

Scott is a long-time fan of air-cooled flat twin BMWs, having toured Southern Africa extensively on his R75/5 model before his departure to Britain and has travelled through the UK and Europe on subsequent models. Relishing the prospect of riding a hand-gear change R12 and having grown up with tales of the original, daring Durban-Johannesburg road race, Scott is viewing his participating in the 2015 event as one of this year's highlights in a life lived close to motorcycles and other people who are also under their spell.

Mark Palmer is another competitor from the UK. He will ride a 1000cc 1923 Zenith Super 8.

Yet another overseas entrant is Dorian Radue, a former South African who now lives in Australia. She has competed in the event several times and is a multiple winner of the award for the best performance by a lady rider. She will ride a Rudge.

There are two other women in the event, Samantha Anderson, who will be first off at the start on her 1909 500cc Humber pedal cycle, and Chantal Madgwick on a 1936 600cc Panther.

Competition for the overall honours will again be very tough, with a number of multiple winners of the DJ Rally in the field for this year's running of this famous, local motor sport event.

The 2015 DJ Regularity Rally starts at 06h00 from the Oxford Village Shopping Centre in Old Main Road, Hillcrest, on March 6 and finishes from 15h45 the next day at the Classic Motorcycle Club's clubhouse on the corner of Power and Refinery Roads in Germiston.

"The Oxford Village Shopping Centre is a new start venue and the owners are making us most welcome as are the various towns on the route. However, the final section from Newcastle to the finish in Germiston will be very demanding on the riders due to road works between Perdekop and Greylingstad with some of the deviations in very poor condition with bad potholes. However, a route check last week showed the whole route to be ride-able," explained Holmes.

The entry for the 2015 DJ Run is divided into four average speed groups – 50, 60, 70 and 80km/h – and five classes, with the first four based on engine capacity – 250cc, 350cc, 500cc and over 500cc – and the fifth class being for motorcycles with a sidecar.



Former Dakar Rally co-driver and an accomplished regularity rally competitor on classic motorcycles, Ralph Pitchford, will be looking for his first win on the DJ Rally on his 1926 500cc P-Type Triumph which he had to repair after a tube burst recently, resulting in substantial damage to the machine. He placed second on the DJ Rally in 2013 and was third last year.

Contact details for clerk of the course Ian Holmes are:
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Regulations and the full entry list are available on three websites: www.pomc.co.za, www.classicmotorcycleclub.co.za and www.vintageandveteranclub.co.za

Sponsors: Bike SA, Castrol, Harvey Travel. Classic Motorcycle Club, Maizey Plastics, Xerox, African Electroplating and Mad Mac Motorcycles.

Roger Houghton
1 March 2015