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Grassroots racing at its best



PMC

The Statue

Crafted from recycled motorcycle parts by Goolwa-based SA sculptor James Stewart, this year-long project is in its final stages, just needing the rider to be constructed. Stewart specialises in salvaging industrial parts to create art, but this is his biggest challenge yet.

Statue set to honour Ken Blake

Phoenix rises for 'Snakey Blakey' with mechanical masterpiece

AS A STATUE takes shape for its unveiling at the upcoming Ken Blake Festival at Sthathalbyn in South Australia, the Phoenix Motorcycle Club has explained its involvement.

"Ken started his motorcycle racing with our club and went on to achieve huge success in Australia before venturing overseas," club president Rick Dowsett said.

"The Phoenix Motorcycle Club started as a group of what they called 'milk bar cowboys' just having fun. When the police interest in their activities increased someone

suggested they become a registered club and that's what happened in 1964. They started running scrambles meetings with the Elizabeth Motorcycle Club at Snake Gully, and teenager Ken was one of the corner marshals."

Blake later earned the nickname 'Snakey Blakey' for his lurid riding style, which took him to the heights of production and two-stroke racing in Australia before he headed overseas in the late 1970s. The death of the 11-times Australian champion at the Isle of Man in 1981

shocked the motorcycle fraternity, including the Phoenix Club, by then one of the largest in Australia.

The statue will be unveiled by SA Governor Hieu Van Le during the festival celebrating this great rider at his home town on 26-28 October.

A panel of guests, including several of his contemporaries, will speak about the young tearaway on a Triumph Bonneville who went from fast road rides in the Adelaide Hills in the 1960s to the Grand Prix circuits of the world in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Another highlight of the weekend will be a memorial ride along the roads where Blake honed his skills. There will be a motorcycle trade expo, show 'n' shine, Ken Blake memorabilia and racebikes, plus a big screen for those wanting to keep up to date with the MotoGP action from Phillip Island.

The Phoenix Motorcycle Club is just one of a long list of sponsors of what is hoped to become an annual event underpinned by the local tourism authority.

HAMISH COOPER

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NSW MP has a go

POLITICIANS ARE SUPPOSED to lead from the front. And that is exactly what New South Wales MP Liesl Tesch did last month when the Central Coast Junior Motorcycle Club staged its Junior Dirt Track Championship meeting at Somersby. Tesch, a seven-time Paralympian, delivered a simple message of "get in and have a go" as she officially opened the meeting by leading a parade lap as the passenger on a trike (right). PETER BAKER

