

The MNZ ATV Commissioner report 2023

Introduction

Starting with the “State of Play” for the sport in case anyone is unaware there is only one official ATV club registered with MNZ at this present time and this is the Canterbury ATV Association, it has also been this way for the time I have been involved with the sport (2016). There is a representation in the North Island which are attached to the MNZ club Taranaki Motorcycle Club, there are volunteers in the club which have a preference to ATV's but are assisting as volunteers to help the club in return for a favourable return on ATV participation and ATV only Events. Both models have their advantages and disadvantages where one fails the other succeeds.

Over the past 3 years I have taken time to get invested into the running of each entity either providing advice, providing resources or providing financial assistance to particular events or in aspects of a rider's financial requirements, all of this points to one common goal and that is participation-based income, I hope to in this report outline cause and effect of this and what I recommend as opportunities going forward.

ATV Member Perception Of MNZ

Early in my involvement with the sport the story told to me was that MNZ are out of touch with the sport, not proactive with needs and requirements of ATV's, they could do things better to make things cheaper for the members and help with retention, what do we get for our MNZ licence, and the list goes on, as you can see there is a general theme here. I too have been on the receiving end of this where generally the large number of requests for my help and assistance is to provide financial support.

This from my point of view is also a failing on my part as commissioner as most of the initiatives and objectives I have set out to provide or have started to try and spark growth etc have not been able to get off the ground for various reasons. With all that being said though I would like to point out that this negative perception is changing, with old guard slowly moving on and newer people coming in their dealings with MNZ have definitely been of a positive nature and I definitely hear how helpful they have been etc, even my dealings with head office have been brilliant, always there when you need them, never shying away from help or giving assistance where required.

Workload

As is with all amateur sport the volunteer help is the hardest to find and while I can't attest to other clubs within MNZ the actual workload is too high in order to successfully run a club, and success is also a moving target as both entities (Nth & Sth islands) have a different view on what success looks like and believe they are successful.

Burnout is a massive concern and I have seen it first hand in Canterbury and am watching it play out in the North Island at present.

A recent example of this was when the host club of the MACH 1 2022 ATV MX Championships was run, they got a shock when their First Aid quote came in at \$4000, they had only budgeted on \$2000 and found themselves in a time crunch position of not being able to raise the funds, inevitably the call came to me to help out and once again the hand was out. This to me was a sign that the people running events across the country for ATV's are either lacking in knowledge, leadership, time or all three.

Victim of its Own Size

In short, the volume of people involved means that it's literally a national club and with this comes the inevitable realisation that to get a consistent consensus is nigh on impossible. Recently the events over this year's rule changes prove this as there was no way either side was going to compromise on what they believe is best for the sport so I was forced into a position of one that pleases no one.

Numbers (Participation)

Looking at a participation level and the sport has not grown for the last 3 years, rider levels across all grades have declined and while there can be fluctuations in certain grades the overall numbers have seen a steady decline, there are many reasons for this and it's definitely not due to not having passionate people.

Hybrids

This concept causes the most concern and conflict within the community, on one side of the fence is the ATV purist and on the other side is the ATV realist, while I have my personal view on the application, I have taken my time to hear both sides of the story and they are very compelling as mentioned before they are very passionate, the largest thing it comes to here is what does the future of the sport look like moving forward.

Recommendations

Recourses for events

One of the biggest issues that comes from what I've seen is how do clubs overcome their hurdles without putting their hand out. While this concept is flawed as clubs are always looking for support (Sponsors, investors, members etc) all too often ATV's have looked to the governing body for assistance, from here on in with me as your commissioner this will not happen anymore, I ask that only under duress circumstances that request of this nature be accepted and ask that any attempt come with the provision of at least one cycle of a board meeting to consider why and ask questions as of the host club as to why

Hybrid Future

Whether we like it or not these are coming and are the future (In my opinion) while parts are available for all models of ATV's the older ones are getting harder to find and there comes a point where demand exceeds supply which is only good for suppliers. While I can't predict the future as far as OEM ATV contribution goes, I can be certain that OEM MX contribution is here for a while longer and allowing this to happen can only benefit the sport there just needs to be control around the concept from a governance level so we are inserting a safe product into the community.

ATV Commission

I require the support of MNZ to set up a commission, the commissions role will have the following objectives

- Media representation
- Possible events to be run at (I.E the masters games in Dunedin)
- How to source finances (I.E pub charity)
- Community support (support fundraisers)
- Hybrid concept development
- Land acquirement

Summary

To sum up I believe I now have a good idea of the landscape for the discipline and assure I will still do my best to represent the governing body as best I can by distributing a positive message. I now have a good understanding of the past and where the future lies and know that while my task is rather large, I am still motivated to get everyone to understand as I do how awesome the sport is, how enjoyable the community is and that it does have a future within MNZ and the New Zealand community.