

Just Who Is Kawasaki Long Distance Riding Legend, David 'Davo' Jones ?



19-03-08

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Life & Happiness

. . . it's just another road.



When people can't do something themselves, they wanna tell you that you can't do it. You want something you go get it, period! :: Christopher Gardner The Pursuit of Happiness

It was a Honda Stepthrough, one of those old red and white ones with a 50cc motor but it was mine and I had what every growing boy wants. I had freedom to go where I wanted when I wanted. 17 is such a great time to be alive, the world opens up before you after being cocooned in a school, family environment.

My personal travels began shortly after getting my first car, in fact I was only on my learners permit and convinced a mate Rodney that we should drive thousands of kms to Adelaide and back from our homes near Wollongong. Fact was I really wanted to go and he had a licence, but hey we had a dream so off we went.

I am only 5yrs old when my father passes on and my mother has the task of raising four kids under 7, not easy and it eventually took its toll on her. Mum passed on just before I hit 22 years of age but she did much to make me who I am. We would travel at every opportunity, often large distances compared to what some thought "right and proper". She instilled in me my love of the road, I think of her often as I ride.

During one 4 year period I worked in the fast and furious courier business with a one ton truck from Wollongong to busy Sydney and environs each day. To get the numerous pickups done and so make more money I had to learn how to be quick and efficient. Time stopped cost me money. I have since felt this also has aided me in my chosen pastime.

But my own family now consists of three beautiful daughters and a great young son. My wife and I have been through many difficult times since our marriage in 1978, life is never simple but its our goal to look at the good and put aside the negatives. My wife is the only person I want to talk to as I pursue these big distances, she keeps me grounded. We have laughed and cried together at various times, most notably while I was enduring 50c temperatures across the Nullarbor in 2006.

We own a real estate office at Cooroy on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland Australia. Our two eldest daughters work in the office and we couldn't do it without them. The last couple of years have been some of our best financially, but money is not what constitutes being successful. In fact I really don't care much for financial wealth. Pursuit of happiness, that's where its at.

Back to bikes. I have always had a strong feeling towards motorcycles and they completely took over my life once before. From ages 20-31yrs I had a one track focus on dirt bikes, then in 1989 we moved to Queensland and life took over for a while until my lower back decided it needed a rest.

Then in 2003 we decided to have another go and I bought the Kawasaki GTR1000, not new but well looked after. Two years and I barely put 10,000kms on it, then I found my feet. I discovered I could ride long distances and enjoyed every minute of it. Have you ever been driving to work and thought you would like to keep on driving ? I did that once. I love the road, I never want to get to the destination.

I had heard of the Iron Butt Association in the US because a NZ mate of mine had done a 1000ml day and at first I thought he was mad. I don't think like that now. Some do it for the recognition, the certification. The best do it because they just love being on the road. I have read so many excellent tales of riders doing what many think is impossible. Who really knows what another person is capable of, who draws that line in the sand.

In 2003 I founded GTR-AUS.com, an Australian group for Kawasaki GTR owners and in 2006 I founded FarRiders.com to encourage safe long distance riding within Australia.

There have been many clever things said about this but just recently I saw a movie based on the life of Christopher Gardner a stock market legend. In that movie the character playing him said "*When people can't do something themselves, they wanna tell you that you can't do it*".

I often say "I accept that bad stuff happens, I just choose not to focus on it".

Do you ?

If you do then I would like you to narrow your focus and actually SEE your goal, when you can "see" your goal its as easy as heading towards it. In my car I have my visor turned down, this annoys people and some say "but it limits your view, how can you drive like that" to which I reply "the road is down here, I don't need to see the sky all day as I drive".

Too much energy is consumed by taking in more information than we need to attain our goal, narrow your focus and go get it.

My name is David "Davo" Jones and I came into this world in 1956, raised just south of Wollongong. I am who I am because the road is not always what we expect. As the road turns be prepared. Travelling down that road is what we were put here for, what turns we make along the road are up to us as individuals. Opportunities are always there, some are just either too blind to see or too scared to open that door. Grab that handle and rip it open, you will be the better for it. The more you fall the better you get at staying erect.

You are writing your own life story right now. Is it what you imagined as a child? Have you done what you wanted? Will you be happy one day when you read back on your life? Was it a good life? This is not a rehearsal, you have only one chance.

My final word is, it's your dream, don't let anyone take it from you but most of all don't lose sight of it yourself.

See you on the road one day, after all it's just a road.

Davo

Extract from: <http://www.davojones.com/aboutme.htm>
For further information: <http://www.gtr-aus.com>
<http://www.farriders.com>

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Mile eater

Think you're busting a nut doing 300km over the weekend to your usual coffee joint? Try 2700km in 24 hours - Davo did.

It's a common fantasy—you're riding the daily commute yet again, dodging cars intent on your destruction and an inner voice is telling you, "Don't go to work. Get past the traffic and just keep on going."

Real estate agent Davo Jones, of Cooroy, Queensland, is a man who did that one morning, just for the hell of it. And then he found there was a sport which answered his longing to see the horizon.

Certified endurance road riding is a relatively new concept in Australia, though it's been established under the Iron Butt Association banner in America for over 20 years. It has a hardcore following of men and women who will ride up to 2500km in 24 hours. Endurance riding is considered one of the last great amateur sports, with no prize money and often no first place to aim for. The ultimate ride is the Iron Butt Rally held every second year—up to 11,000 miles (17,699km) in 11 days across the United States. This year, over 3000 riders applied for the 120 places. The Iron Butt Association has over 35,000 members worldwide—people who have completed at least one documented and certified Iron Butt ride.

It's a tough, demanding sport and the riders are fanatical about bike preparation and rider fitness. They rely on physical conditioning and risk minimisation to get them through, rather than energy drinks or performance enhancing drugs. Even if a new rider did high mileage by normal standards, it could still take a 6-12 month building up to safely complete the bigger distances. But any bike with a tank range of at least 250km is up for the job. Nortons, Urals, Indians, Royal Enfields and scooters have completed Iron Butt certified rides in America, along with the usual Gold Wings, Harley Davidsons and sports tourers.

UP-KEEP

There's a wealth of information on the internet about which tyres work for which bikes when riding over extreme distances. After much research, Davo runs Dunlop D205s — according to him, a rather average tyre but incredibly long-wearing.

"They're not something I'd be kneading sliding around corners on, but I'll get 16,000-17,000km out of them. It's a tyre that works for distance. I might get 12,000-13,000km from other tyres but, by the time they're getting that old, they are quite dangerous."

He carries a puncture repair kit but hasn't needed it yet.

Davo has never broken down on the road and puts it down to planning and rigorous maintenance. His GTR is very well looked after, even though sometimes it misses a 5000km service because he is out on a ride. His local mechanic understands he doesn't want to break down in the middle of nowhere at 3am. In the past, he has done up to 8500km in eight days without any attention to the bike but, as soon as the ride is over, it goes in for a check-up.

THE PILOT

"You've got to minimise anything that may be annoying. It may not be a problem on a lunch ride but it will be after 2000km."

It's the usual thermals, T-shirt and jersey in winter plus thin, knitted gloves under leather gloves. Year-round, Davo wears LD Comfort riding shorts from the US with special wicking material and less seams. Ordinary undies are likely to rub over extreme distances.

After much searching, Davo wears tough, fully-lined jeans from Denim Leather — an Australian company which hasn't yet launched. The jeans are designed, without side seams, specifically for horse and motorcycle riders. He's been trialling them for the past year and found them exceptionally good for temperatures from -6 to 45°C.

He used to wear leather, but has just switched to a Joe Rocket Alter Ego jacket which he thinks would have seen him through the aborted Nullarbor ride. The removable lining and air vents make it a year-round jacket.

After the Nullarbor experience, he has added an evaporative cooling vest to his kit and any light boot will do, as Davo's are at the cheaper end of the market.

He constantly uses a squeeze-ball to build up hand strength when sitting at the computer and is a fan of Bowen therapy massage for aches and pains. Two weeks before a run, he will stop drinking alcohol to avoid dehydration problems.

THE RIDE

Riders avoid stiffness by exercising on the bike. Standing up, bum crunches, riding one-handed, shoulder rolls, neck rolls and stretching arms above your head all help minimise aches, as long as you don't leave it until you are sore.

On a 24-hour ride, Davo admits he doesn't eat, though he drinks 1-2L of Gatorade each fuel stop and has Muesli bars handy. Other riders swear by regular food intake.

On longer rides, it's important not to eat anything that's going to upset the stomach, so he sticks to a reliable fast-food chain. Soft drinks and caffeine are counterproductive — they quickly cause dehydration. If Gatorade or similar is not available, a rider is better off with water.

On multi-day rides, Davo will sleep an average of six hours a night. He never thinks of the whole ride but rather just getting to the next town. Break a long journey down into lots of small rides joined together.

He makes about six big timed runs a year and in August 2007 rode 18,000km.

About FarRiders™

FarRiders aims to encourage safe long distance riding within Australia along the guidelines of the [Iron Butt Association](#) who have been in the forefront of Long Distance Riding for many years, known within the sport as LDRiding. The idea for FarRiders was conceived in early April 2006 by David "Davo" Jones and launched online on the 17th June 2006 with FarRide #1 taking place at Moree on the 17th June 2006.

Our rides will be based on a minimum distance of 1000 klms in 24hrs

There have always been riders in this vast land of ours who cover huge distances for the love of riding. Look back to the city to city timed rides from the very early years of motorcycling in Australia. Covering 1000k in a day is not a big deal to these riders. All I have done is given them a goal, a base from which to meet and exchange tales for a few hours then return home.

FarRiders is non bike or club specific, it is a group that takes in all types of motorcycles and riders with a common goal of long distance riding.

To become a FarRider a rider needs to either have completed a FarRide or FarRally or be a IBA member having done their IBA ride within Australia. FarRides will be run on a regular basis with common rules applying to each type of ride.

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