



April 17-20

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MEDIA RELEASE



Celebrating 30 years with 'originals' to ride again

They call it catching 'the bug'.

Once a rider contests an Australian Four Day Enduro (A4DE), it's very hard not to keep riding it again and again and again.

For a group of die hard A4DE enthusiasts, this year's Hog's Breath Cafe A4DE will be their 20th, 27th and even 28th.

'Original' riders will be arriving in Warragul, Victoria, as early as tomorrow to get ready to contest the Masters (over 45-years) Class.

Vintage motorcycles and the riders who raced them will also be featured in a display at the final motocross at Lardner Park on Sunday, April 20.

Sydney resident Geoff Ballard is one of the favorites to win the masters title at this year's event.

Geoff, who manages the Ballard's Yamaha Off-Road Team, rode the second A4DE in 1979 and has hardly missed one since.

"It's such a big event, it's our single biggest event in Australian enduro," Ballard said. "What I like about it is the whole of the country gets involved.

"It's such a significant event that people travel from all over - South Australia, Western Australia, because it isn't as if they are coming only for one day of racing, it's four days.

"The four day attracts so many riders and it really is getting better and better every year. And it's a very fun event, challenging, I still love doing it."

As the manager of one of Australia's premier motorcycle race teams (which includes Chris Hollis, who was the fastest Aussie and finished second outright at last year's A4DE) Ballard has a lot more to worry about at the event than most riders.

"It's more to do in the lead up, there's a lot of work leading up to it for me, the easy part is getting on the bike and doing it," he said. "At every control I will ask 'how are my guys going?', but they are all getting more experienced... the beauty of this event is it's all in the rider's hands."

Ballard said in the "earlier days" the A4DE was harder because the bikes "were not as good".

"You had to spend all the time maintaining the bikes, spokes broke, chains needed adjusting constantly, hydration was also an issue because you didn't have Camelbak's or Endura back then," he said.



"... it can be very challenging if the weather goes against us, I guess that's why it's called enduro and not 'wuss'."
- Motorcycle legend Geoff Ballard (pictured)



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“But that was all part of it, it’s a great event and it can be very challenging if the weather goes against us, I guess that’s why it’s called enduro and not ‘wuss’.”

Another of the initial A4DE enthusiasts who will be attending the 30th A4DE is John Hall. Hall is the man responsible for getting the A4DE started - he organised the first four events and is still heavily involved in the industry.

John sponsors riders, is the Australian importer of TM Motorcycles and runs the New South Wales bike shop Cross Country Action (a full interview with John will be posted at www.a4de.com on Tuesday).

The A4DE is considered one of the most prestigious enduro motorcycle events in the world. It has attracted nearly 350 racers this year and is expected to contribute more than \$1.5 million to the Australian economy.

The occasion has this year drawn five-time MX World Champion and BMW pilot, Belgium’s Joel Smets, as well as flying Frenchman Antoine Meo and Aussie ex-pat Jake Stapleton, who now calls Eastern Canada home but grew up in the NSW Hunter Valley region.

Parc Ferme for the event will be located at Buln Buln Recreation Ground. If you would like to get autographs, watch the riders working on their bikes, leaving for or returning from the day’s racing, come to the recreation ground between 7am and 9am or 2pm and 4pm on April 17, 18 or 19. April 20 is the final motocross at Lardner Park.

To check out rider profiles and interviews or for more information please visit www.a4de.com



Media: Leigh Hutton (A4DE Media Manager) - 0404 062 763

Final motocross details

Date: Sunday, April 20

Time: Racing from 9.30am

Location: Lardner Park, 155 Burnt Store Road, Warragul

Admission: Adults only \$15, \$8 for children 14 and under, kids five and under free

