

The 'Walk About'

An American Vietnam Veteran friend of mine that lives in Vietnam recently took a group of six Australian Vietnam Veterans on a cross country motorcycle trip back to their old battlegrounds via rental motorcycles. In a whirlwind of getting ready they forgot one of the most important factors, what 'ol' Big John from Perth later called "the Walk About". They counted on the motorcycle rental shop to do the pre-trip and mindlessly jumped aboard the motorcycles.

The first to go was Stink's little Honda Dream II that barely made it out of town before an under inflated rear tire shredded apart and took him to the ground. Big John laughed, "Ya' shoulda' done a Walk About Stink, all yer mates could see that tire was low before we left ...don't get any of that blood on me, this is me good shirt".

Delayed because of the tire, they were still on the road at dark when two riders found out they had no lights and were still two hours away from their Hotel in Mui Ni. Preacher Jones hit an unseen hole in the road that tossed him to the ground and broke the bearings in his front wheel, the bike Squatter was riding also had no lights and it just quit running. Standing in the dark along the quiet, lonesome road 'Ol' Big John from Perth blurts out, "Ya shoulda done a Walk About mate. Them there scooters should 'ave never left the shop". He was lucky to survive the night.

A day later Big John's engine on his newer Honda Air Blade froze up going across the white, and very hot sand dunes near Song Mao ...his mates all had a good laugh. "Ya' shoulda' done a Walk About and checked the oil Big John" they said. The laughter didn't last long when they realized they only had two bottles of water between them and 20 more hot kilometers of pushing Big John's bike before the next village.

Think "Walk About" is a silly name for a pre-trip inspection, we Americans would have said "You should have done your 'T-CLOCS' before you left"... right? Tires, Controls, Lights, Oil, Chassis, and Stands. So it just goes to show you, if you want a smooth, trouble free trip "DO YOUR WALK ABOUT" and check your T-CLOCS.

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