

Vale Myles Stivano

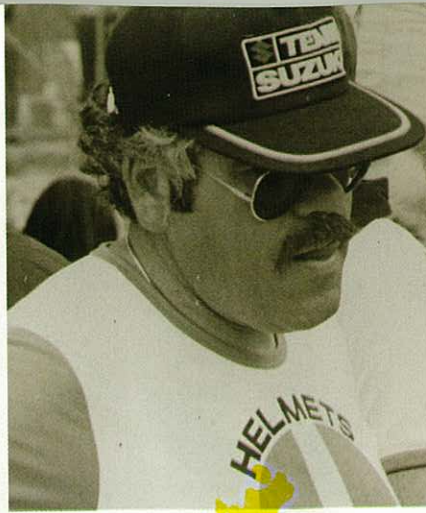
Somewhere in the depths of the *two*wheels back issues, there's a story on one of the 1970s Castrol Six-Hour Production Races, with a man captioned as a "visiting American admiral".

The bloke in question was Myles Carson Stivano and he was in fact sales manager for a motorcycle distributor. The cheeky description referred to his thick moustache and black cap with "scrambled egg" braid on the peak.

Myles died on February 19, aged 64, after a battle with cancer. He was as big and colourful as that admiral description, especially around Six-Hour time.

Stivano was right in the thick of the race as an executive with Kawasaki NSW, Suzuki Australia and later BMW. He was a gift for reporters with his pithy quotes and sage-like advice, dispensed with a slow nodding of the head for maximum emphasis. On race day he was right in the action, either as a course commentator or plotting success in pitlane.

Myles liked a bet too, be it on the horses or the motorbikes. Sometimes his wagers didn't come off. He said in 1980 he'd do a lap of



Amaroo Park naked if Wayne Gardner won the Six-Hour. ABC-TV viewers might have wondered why commentators Bob Vincent and John Smailes seemed distracted during the victory presentation to Gardner and Andrew Johnson. They were watching a largish, bare-skinned man scoot towards the circuit pond and dive in.

That said, Stivano was a savvy operator in the Six-Hour, with his ideas on the machines to run and the riders to support.

Whatever Myles' deeds as a racer, he bettered them as a salesman, commentator, raconteur and general life of a party. He raced pushbikes with journalist Noel Christensen. He commentated at the country's biggest events - from the top of the Mountain at the Easter Bathurst meetings, at the Castrol Six-Hour and the Supercross Masters for Phil Christensen, the

event promoter and elder brother of Noel.

Leading motorcycle road tester Fraser Stronach said simply that Myles Stivano was the best PR man BMW ever had. Sadly, he died just over a week before BMW's debut in the World Superbike championship.

But it's the stories that will live on about Myles. How he told future multiple Bathurst winner Tony Hatton that he'd show him the fast way around Mount Panorama. How in Myles' BMW days he was visiting a "female friend" somewhere on the coast north of Sydney, and was bitten on the bum by a redback spider. As he told it, he was sitting on the edge of her verandah - perhaps in the same mode of dress as his famous Six-Hour swim. Problem was, he then had an allergic reaction to the spider.

Myles Stivano spent his last six months in the care of Phil Christensen and his partner Chris Staunton at their home in suburban Gladesville, visited daily by his sons Phillip and Daniel. *Don Cox* >>>

Ride for the Hills

There will be a mass motorcycle ride in aid of the Red Cross Victorian Bushfire Relief effort on Sunday, April 5. The ride leaves Pier Road, St Kilda, at 11am and finishes in Whittlesea. Check out <www.rideforthehills.org.au> for registration and more information.

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