

The hills around Sunny Corner make for some of the best trail riding in the entire country and the boys from Sunny Corner Trail Tours know it all like the back of their hand.



SUNNY DAYS

Just two hours from Sydney lies the trail riding paradise that is Sunny Corner. Do yourself a favour and get a taste of it with the team from Sunny Corner Trail Tours.

Story & Photography: Clubby

YOU KNOW you've had a great trail tour when your hands are aching, your butt cheeks are tingling and you can't wipe the smile from your face. If you like a good, solid trail tour as much as we do, where the emphasis is on riding wicked trails rather than transport sections that link the good bits together, then get on the blower and hook up with the boys at Sunny Corner Trail Tours.

If you've ridden the Rally and want to get back there for more than a once-a-year fix, or you just want to explore all the tasty trail riding treats the area offers, five blokes from the sleepy hamlet of Wallerawang are ready and waiting to help you do exactly that.

A GREAT IDEA AT THE TIME

Like many a great business model, the concept behind Sunny Corner Trail Tours was hatched out over a beer at a pub. In this case it was the main bar at the Royal Hotel at Wallerawang, and the five blokes involved were Geoff Henning, Paul McLachlan, Mick Grant, Eddie Lamborn and The General, Kevin Burrows. Actually, at the beginning, there was a sixth partner, Mark Taylor, but he's since had to back off his involvement in the tours due to other commitments.

Now, what gives these blokes the inside running on staging tours in the area is the fact they're deeply involved in running the KTM Sunny Corner Trail Bike Rally. In actual fact, they are the Rally! With a hard core passion for riding and knowing full well there is so much more riding in the surrounding hills than what they could dish up in the Rally,

LET THE SUN SHINE IN

Chances are you've heard of Sunny Corner. This patch of trail riding paradise is home to the annual KTM Sunny Corner Trail Bike Rally, which is staged in the vast pine forests between Lithgow and Bathurst in the NSW central tablelands. The Rally is one of the biggest happenings every year on the NSW calendar, drawing as many as 700 riders to the lush green forests that are littered with logging tracks and fire trails that offer instant smile-on-your-dial dirt bike riding good times.

Now, what a lot of riders don't know, is that the trail riding in the district extends to far more areas than just the Sunny Corner forests. Which is where Sunny Corner Trail Tours comes in.

MAIN: Every time we would crest a hill, there was just more awesome trail riding awaiting us on the other side! Rest assured the General's boys will give you as much riding as you want! **1:** The General gets the pre-ride briefing and paperwork underway. **2:** Gotta start the ride with a team photo outside the Royal Hotel, the top pub in Wallerawang! **3:** Mere moments after the start of the ride we were carving it up along sensational single-track trails. **4:** Mick Grant, Paul McLachlan and Geoff Henning are your guides at Sunny Corner Trail Tours.





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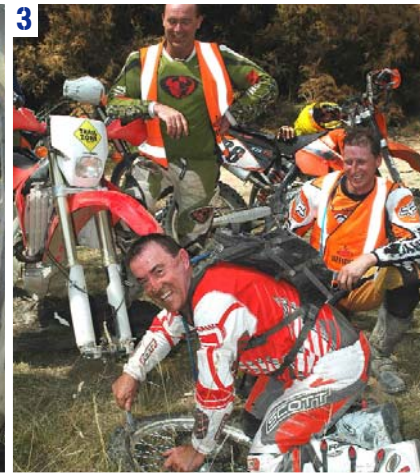


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MAIN: Taking time out after a wicked session of pine forest single-track to get our breath back. 1. It's easy to see where the loggers have been, because the forest is suddenly decimated and the ground left bare, ready for replanting and logging again in another 20 years or so. 2. Fast Eddie is the team's drinking captain and sweated it out over the BBQ to feed the troops at the lunch stop. The least we could do was chow down on all that tucker. 3. Tour guides Geoff and Paul were more than happy to hang back and let Popgun fix the only flat on the tour, on our CRF250X test bike. Look on and learn from a world tyre changing champ, boys!



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A VERY MANLY BUNCH

We hooked up with some mates from the Manly Warringah District Motorcycle Club for this Sunny Corner Trail Tours ride and afterwards asked them for their verdict (pictured left to right):

Don-Juan Phillips: I raced a Sprint out here ages ago and that ride was pretty tight and gnarly. I could have gone for even more technical stuff on this ride, but overall it was well organised.

Adam Craig: I have trail ridden at Sunny Corner before but the guys dished up a lot more riding than I have done out here. The tour is definitely money well spent.

Marshall Gadd: I've ridden the Rally before and it was good this time not to have to ride with another 600 riders! I would definitely recommend this tour to anyone.

Popgun: Quality, quantity and variety. Definitely good value for the terrain on offer.

Muz McLerie: Good back-up and catering and the riding was even better than I expected.

Danny Ryan: I love single-track and we got a lot of that, as well as a BBQ on top of a mountain!



they launched Sunny Corner Trail Tours.

"Mate, we all love riding and we're always out in the forests cutting trails," enthused Fast Eddie from his perch at the bar at the Royal when we hooked up with the Sunny Corner team to taste their tours. "We all reckoned we could run tours and show riders the real good stuff we've got out here, and maybe at the end of the season we'd have enough money over for a set of tyres each!"

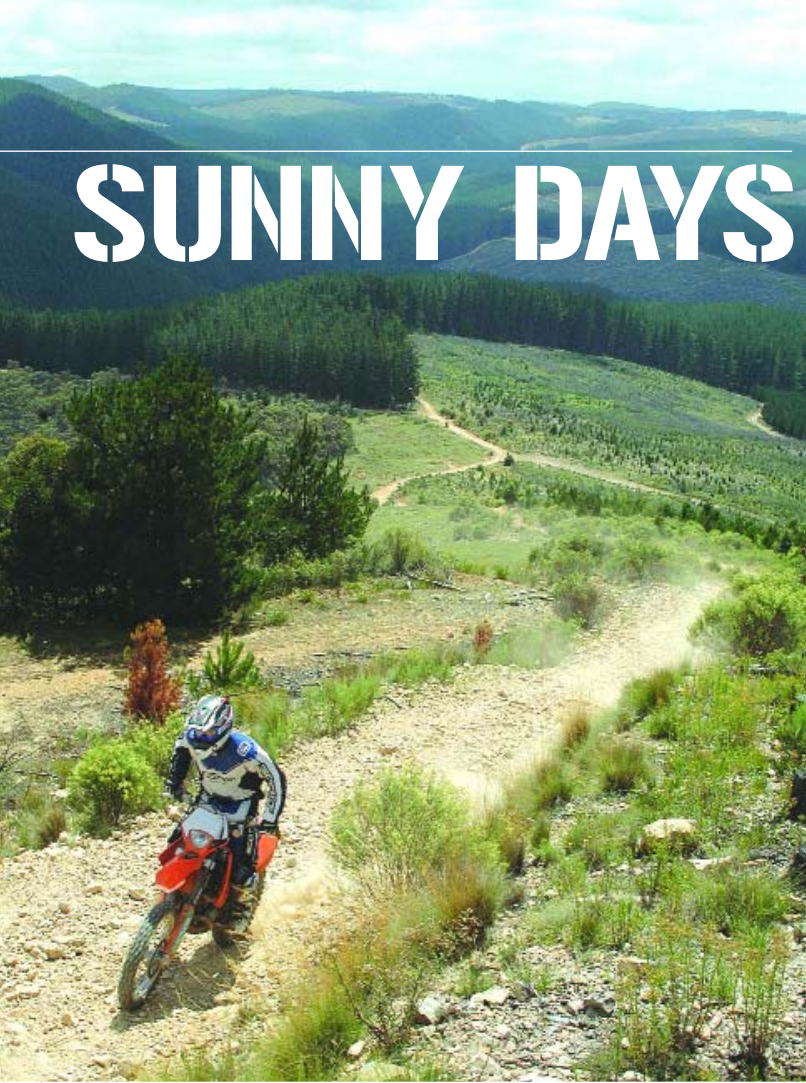
Endless lush, green forests littered with logging tracks and fire trails.

THE GENERAL'S TROOPS

Eddie's partners pack some serious credentials for staging trail tours. Paul, Geoff and Mick split the lead, mid and sweep rider duties on tour and one look at their fully-prepped KTM (of course!) thumpers tells you they know their stuff. MSC steering dampers, hot pipes, trick hubs and air box covers that have been Swiss-cheesed tell you these boys are on top of their game. Paul and Geoff have raced the Australian Safari, Condo 750 and Finke, and all of them are out in the bush almost every weekend, riding from their back gates into the forest – lucky buggers!

As for the General, KB only took up riding a couple of years ago after landing in Wang (as the locals call it) and hooking up with the rest of the troops and discovering dirt bikes. As the most senior member of the pack, the General oversees the majority of the admin of the business

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1 MAIN: See those trails and forests disappearing off into the distance? It's all part of the feast of wicked riding on offer with Sunny Corner Trail Tours. 1. This is about as open as the transport sections get, the rest of the time you are deep in the forests. 2. Trail boss Paul McLachlan fires his KTM thumper up a gnarly hill climb. 3. Poppun gives the General's slap-up feed at the lunch stop a big thumbs up.



mid-week and then drives the support truck on tour, usually with Eddie in the shot-gun seat to share the BBQ duties at the lunch stop. And crikey, what a ripper feed they turn on at lunch!

VITAL STATS

Who: Sunny Corner Trail Tours.

What: Guided trail tours in the renowned Sunny Corner forests and surrounding districts.

Where: Sunny Corner Trail Tours is based at Wallerawang, just west of Lithgow, a two-drive from Sydney up and over the Blue Mountains, where a trail riding paradise awaits.

When: Four two-day tours are scheduled this season (May 6/7, June 24/25, July 29/30 and October 21/22), while custom tours can be arranged for private groups or clubs. One-day tours also available.

Weather: In Autumn the weather can still be warm and dry, while in Winter and Spring it can definitely be cold and wet, as many who have ridden the KTM Sunny Corner Trail Bike Rally can attest! Get a weather check before your tour and prepare accordingly.

Terrain: There's everything ... except for bitumen road transport sections! Sweet single-track through pine and eucalyptus forests, fire-trails, powerline access tracks, logging tracks, hills, creeks and rock farms are all on the agenda, as much of it as you want!

Cost: \$250 for the two-day tour, which includes overnight pub accommodation, dinner, breakfast, lunch each day, trail snacks, fuel after the first tank, guides and support vehicle.

Contact: Kevin Burrows on (0412) 193 631 or check out the www.sunnycornertrailtours.com.au web site and be sure to tell 'em **TRAIL ZONE** sent ya!



HOW GOOD IS THE RIDING!

A trail tour is only as good as the riding. In this case, Sunny Corner Trail Tours' two-day tour dishes up in spades. The riding never lets up and it's all good, solid trail riding, with buggie-all tar road transport sections. Strangely enough, we expected to be doing laps around the same trails used in the Rally each year, but truth be told we barely touched that part of the forest.

As Poppun commented during the ride, "There's a whole lot of good riding these blokes are keeping for themselves that never makes it into the Rally. At least they'll share it with customers on the tours!"

It's all good, solid trail riding with buggie-all tar road transport sections.

The two-day tour is split into two distinct riding areas. The first day takes you east from Wallerawang to the Wolfgang Plateau between Lithgow and Capertee, none of which ever makes it into the Rally. The second day heads west from Wang to Sunny Corner and Dark Corner and the best thing is, Paul, Geoff and Mick know the trails like the back of their hands, so they can tailor the ride to suit the skill levels of the riders on tour. Rest assured these guys can make it as easy or as tough as you want – the choice is yours!

THE SUN GODS ARE SMILING

As a relatively new operation, the blokes at Sunny Corner Trail Tours are still feeling their way, but from the taste we've had, they're roosting down the right track. And all this is on offer just two hours from Sydney. So what are you waiting for, get out there and do it!

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