

# wheezy Rider

*Newsletter of the Fremantle group*

Jan 2013  
No 137

Newsletter of the Fremantle Branch of the Ulysses Club of Australia Inc

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\$1.00

Happy New Year Troops,

Well – looks like Lori & I made it into 2013 - despite all attempts to the contrary! Well done us!!

Personally, the Grim Reaper came for me but I beat him off with a vacuum cleaner. Talk about Dyson with death! Boom Boom!!

I'm looking forward to this year and all the fun it will bring our Branch. We will have memorable rides, fantastic social gatherings, great coffee (not to mention other favourite beverages of choice!) and good companionship.

The Plod will plod, the Victoria Café will buzz, Ride Leaders will venture to places they like whilst others will dutifully follow, the TEC will watch for all misdemeanours & good deeds and “Madeja Mugatroid” will reward those ‘caught’ doing either.

Some of us will venture further afield. Some will check-out the US scene astride Goldwings, some may have a peek in Europe or Asia, whilst others will stay closer to home and ask Wendy for advice!

Whatever we do let's stay safe, enjoy ourselves and revel in each other's company - but respect all around us.

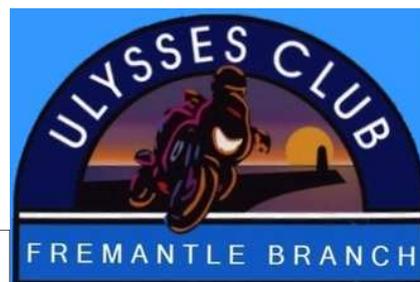
Our Club motto is “A social club for motorcyclists over the age of 40” and whilst this is excellent let's not forget our Branch motto “We don't care ....We ride there” – which emphasises that our common bond is the love of riding bikes. The Ride Calendar is looking abysmal again with no entries recorded this side of the March long week-end – and that's being organised by a member living in Busselton! Leading is NOT difficult, is lots of fun once you make a start and there's plenty of assistance available. So if you haven't been out front yet, or want to try again, go to the website Ride Calendar page, scroll down and click on “Contact Tony” at the bottom.

See y'all Wednesday (9th January) @ Swan Yacht Club from 6pm.

Spence (53780)



*We don't care....We ride there*



# 'Welcome'

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**2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT SWAN YACHT**  
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Fremantle Ulysses site: [www.ulyssesfremantle.com](http://www.ulyssesfremantle.com)

**Note: Next meeting, Wed 13th**  
**February 2013**

**And as always**

Wednesday morning Plods from South beach kiosk assemble at 9:00am for a 9:30am start. If you're an early riser, some members meet for breakfast at 8:00am before the Plod.

The group will meet at the Ill Capriccio Café Bar corner of South Terrace and Commercial Street South Fremantle. There is 2 hour parking across the road and also behind the Indian restaurant on the opposite corner of Commercial Street.

The Saturday morning coffee get togethers commence at 10:00am. at the Victoria Café. This café is located at the eastern end of the Fremantle 'E' Shed Markets. Great Coffee, come and give it a try.



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# Quartermasters Ramblings

Dec 2012



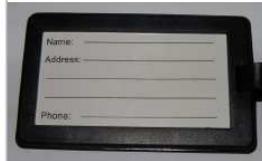
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*Some exciting news this month is that Ulysses Club has had the opportunity to purchase some leather vests and leather jackets that will be available for sale at the Fraser Coast 2013 AGM Event. These have the Old Man Logo embroidered on the back and are stock from XDC who had a licence agreement with us but is now closing his business.*



*The Office Staff have asked me to remind you about your Christmas orders. The office will be open up to & including 21st December 2012, but to guarantee delivery before Christmas, the cut off date will be 30th November 2012. Orders will still be processed after this date but may not be delivered in time.*



*Have very Merry Christmas!*

*Chris Glover  
National Purchasing Officer*



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## 2013 Moto Guzzi V7 Racer vs. 2013 Triumph Thruxton A café racer title fight

By Jon Langston, Dec. 24, 2012, Photography by Mike Maez

We don't need yet another class in the resurgence of café bike culture, do we? Nah. The evidence is there on the street: at every bike night and every rally, on boardwalks and boulevards from Santa Monica to Manhattan.

Whether it's a restored CB, a classic BSA or even a stripped-down Sportster, retro bikes are downright ubiquitous. Yes, friends, a good look around is all the proof one needs to know that vintage is all the rage, if not in actual iron then certainly in appearance and form. And it's more than just tastemakers like [Jesse James](#) and [Roland Sands](#) jumping on the retro wagon. Garage builders are ordering clip-ons and rear sets by the pallet-full.

Even manufacturers are capitalizing, with ultra-stylized versions of their own existing motorcycles. [Harley's Nightster](#) has been around since 2007, and Triumph's Thruxton edition of its reincarnated Bonneville model will celebrate its – get this – 10-year anniversary next year. And while venerable Italian marque Moto Guzzi has always been admired more for its timeless style than its trailblazing technology (case in point: visit its website), the company's retro standard V7 has been competing with the Bonnie for several years now.

For 2013, the V7 line has been updated with a new engine and is available in three variations, as noted in [our preview](#). The blacked-out Stone has the lowest MSRP at \$8390, while wire-spoke wheels and two-tone paint jazz up the \$8990 Special. But it's the striking, vintage-inspired Racer that steps into the ring for this comparo.



While both the Moto Guzzi V7 Racer (left) and the Triumph Thruxton have curb appeal in spades, the extravagant Italian racer outshines - literally - its British counterpart.

As faithful MO readers undoubtedly noticed, we recently spent significant time aboard 2013 renditions of both the Racer and Thruxton, and have offered up succinct impressions of each. The reason for the brevity? Because we always knew we ultimately wanted to give our readers a side-by-side comparison of these two highly stylized, pseudo-retro machines. So let's get ready to rumble.

### **Tale of the Tape**

Truth be told, a comparison of these two bikes is rather like two boxers of differing weight classes mixing it up in a title fight. No matter whether the larger contender (in this case, the 865cc Thruxton) moves down in weight for the bout, or the smaller fighter (the 744cc V7 Racer) moves up, it's just not going to be a fair contest. The quicker, flashier upstart will likely land a few stinging jabs, but the bigger brawler has the clear advantage: it's got a longer reach, and its punches carry more heft.

Beauty is always in the eye of the beholder, but the flamboyant Guzzi dances into the ring with more panache than the comparatively conservative Triumph.



**Both machines are highly stylized throwbacks to a bygone era, successful at capturing the imagination and stirring the soul.**

"I really like the profile and stance of the Thruxton, but it becomes nearly invisible when the V7 Racer is parked beside it," comments Editor-in-Chief Kevin Duke. "It's the unique chrome tank that immediately draws in the eyes, but it goes much deeper than that. It has a timeless stance that looks just about perfect to my eyes. The red finish of the chassis and wheel hubs adds a color flourish to the black and silver base, and the number plates and subtle flyscreen add to its distinctive qualities."

"The Thruxton presents a more subtle personality," Duke adds, "walking softly while carrying a bigger stick."

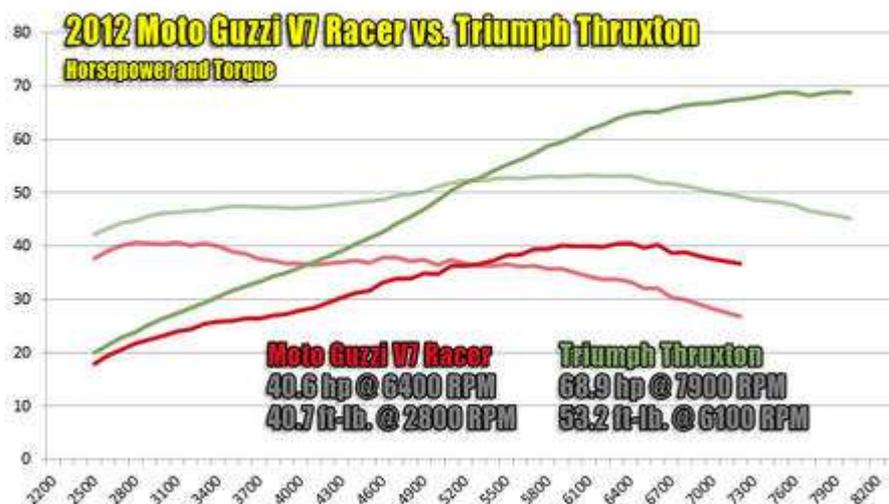
The Thruxton's 865cc parallel-Twin is the same solid motor used in all the Bonneville's current incarnations, although its ECU mapping results in an extra horsepower over the Bonnie. (The other brother in the Classics line, the recently reviewed Scrambler, nets different performance mainly because its engine features a 270-degree crankshaft, instead of the Bonnie's and Thrux's 360-degree spacing.) Willing at the bottom end and capable at the top, it exudes confidence in every gear. Whether you're café hopping, canyon carving or lane splitting, the Thruxton is game for pretty much whatever you ask of it.



The Thruxton's 865cc Parallel-Twin is tuned not for overwhelming performance but for versatility and practical use.

Meanwhile, the Racer sports the longitudinally opposed V-Twin engine that made Guzzi famous. For 2013, V7 engines are comprised of 70% new components and boast slightly boosted horsepower and torque ratings over its predecessor. Still, while the Racer certainly exudes a frisky attitude that matches its appearance and marginally lives up to its moniker, as previously pointed out, there's little benefit in winding it up; by the time you reach 6000 rpm, all the ponies have been let out of the barn and the handlebar buzz becomes pronounced.

**MOTORCYCLE.COM**  
est. 1994



Our dyno numbers confirmed our suspicions: The engine in Guzzi's Racer doesn't come close to matching its nomenclature, struggling to top even 40 horsepower. The Thruxton's horsepower and torque curves dwarf its Italian rival. From the saddle, the Guzzi's output feels more competitive than it looks on this chart.

"I had hoped for more power from Guzzi's redesigned 90-degree V-Twin," Duke comments. "It feels a little torquier and livelier than the previous Racer's powerplant, yet it remains a mild mill. But, while its power can't be considered anything close to arm-stretching, it never feels gutless in normal use, cranking out usable grunt whenever it's asked."



**The Guzzi will allow entry into the ton-up club, but just barely.**

In addition to retro presentations and air-cooled, twin-cylinder engines fed with electronic fuel injection, there are plenty other similarities between these two bikes to warrant this prizefight.

The five-speed transmissions of each are well-suited to their respective motors. The Guzzi's tranny will keep its motor humming while stylin' and profilin'. But by 70 mph you've likely run the shifter clear through its cycle. And using the upper end of its power band is accompanied by significant vibration.

"More prevalent than the V7's power deficit is the strong vibration that transmits to a rider," Duke asserts. "V-Twins have perfect primary balance, but the secondary vibes from the small-block Guzzi are surprisingly strong."

Guzzi-philes should rest assured that the Racer's not without its charming, quirky Guzzi-ness. As Duke points out, when the engine is revved at a stop the varying rotational forces of the crank cause the entire bike to pitch rightward. Also, there's no discernible "click" when going into first gear, so it's not uncommon to find yourself bouncing the ball of your left foot on the lever at stoplights to ensure you're ready when the light changes. And what's up with that phantom neutral?

"The V7's gearbox isn't quite up to the standard set by the Triumph, with disappointingly longish throws and less precision," says Duke. "Its shifter was initially mounted too high and made the condition worse until we used the clever eccentric mounts for the shifter peg to bring it to a more agreeable position."

Meanwhile, the Thruxton changes gears crisply and its easy interplay takes full advantage of the engine's alacrity. Whether milking second for extra speed on the on-ramp or stomping into fourth to pass a dawdling freeway driver, the Thruxton's drivetrain relishes the challenge of being pushed to real-world extremes. Its wet, multi-plate clutch gives it a leg up on the Guzzi's dry, single-plate that has a surprisingly heavy pull for such a mild mill, although both seemed a bit weak to Duke.



With its more amenable power plant, the Triumph has the clear advantage when speed is asked for.

### **Blow-By-Blow**

Countering the Guzzi's 121cc displacement disadvantage is the bike's relatively light weight. Comparing curb weights (full of fuel and ready to ride) can be misleading, as the V7's generous 5.8-gallon tank can carry 10 more pounds' worth of fuel than the Triumph's 4.2-gallon tank. But even subtracting the fuel difference, the Guzzi has a clear advantage. Sans gas, it scales in at just over 400 pounds, while the Thruxton weighs 471.

"The Racer feels much lighter than the Thruxton when picking it off its sides tand and rolling it out of the garage, adding to its friendly nature," Duke observes. "It not only feels lighter than the Thruxton, it handles that way, too, initiating a turn with less effort than its British rival."

The weight difference begs the question of, given a hardier power plant, what a real burner the Racer might be. In this bout, it's clear that the Racer is the real lightweight – and in this case, that's a good thing. Count this as one of those stinging jabs.

Both bikes sport a tubular steel, double-cradle frame. The Guzzi's, highlighted in that same racy red, wins in terms of sex appeal, but Duke noted that hitting mid-corner bumps in fast turns upsets the chassis, giving the sensation as if it might be flexing. The Thruxton displayed no such behaviour.

Both bikes also feature comparably sized single discs in the rear with two-piston floating calipers, and 320mm discs up front. Although the Racer uses a higher-spec four-piston Brembo caliper up front, it didn't offer the expected performance advantage over the Thruxton's two-piston Nissins.

"The Brembo name promises better response but doesn't deliver, with a fairly long pull of the lever before lazily biting," Duke says. "I'd like to try brake pads with toothier material that would bite quicker. The Thruxton's front brake feels more powerful than the Guzzi's and offers decent feedback through braided-steel lines."



The name on the caliper is a tease; the Racer's Brembo brakes don't perform any better than their counterparts, the Thruxton's Nissins.

Both bikes have a telescopic fork (at 41mm, Triumph's is a millimeter thicker), and both utilize a twin-sided swingarm in the rear (the Triumph's is steel; the Guzzi's, alloy) with dual shocks adjustable for preload and rebound damping; the Racer's also include compression damping. Note that the Thruxton's fork is preload adjustable, while the Racer's is not, making the Thru's suspension slightly more adaptable to real-world riding conditions – a theme that consistently presents itself in this matchup.



That beautiful chrome tank, with its racy red badging and sexy embossed leather strap, is nothing short of massive. It holds 5.8 gallons (21.95 litres), meaning a Guzzi rider could attain close to 480 kms on a single tank. Guzzi wins the fuel battle.

Also, both retro-rockers feature spoked rims of equal size – 18 inches up front and 17 out back. The Thruxton's 36-spoke front and 40-spoke rear are indeed classy, but the Racer's spokes, also in chrome but set off by black rims and racy red hubs, take this round based on allure alone – another recurring theme of this retro-ride title fight.

But there are also substantial differences between these retro rockers, chief among them the Thruxton's chain drive versus the Racer's reactive shaft. Guzzi has done a good job of limiting driveline lash and the jacking effect suffered by some shaft-driven bikes.



**The Thruxton's rearsets keep the rider's feet down. ....while the Guzzi's mid-controls position even a diminutive test rider's knees just under the hand grips.**

When it comes to cockpit ergonomics, the Thruxton's bars aren't as painfully low as the bars used when the bike was first launched. "They placed no weight on my wrists at highway speeds, providing a perfect balance of sport and comfort," Duke says.

Meanwhile, the Racer puts its rider further hunched over in attack mode. The Thrux's rearsets put its pilot's feet under his butt, while the Racer's ergos have its rider's knees relatively close to the bar ends. Unfortunately, the Racer's aggressive stance is little more than a taunt; you're ready, willing, and able to attack, but you've got no weapon at your disposal other than your dashing good looks. Holding that ready pose gets tiresome – like being stuck in traffic in a Lamborghini.

After a day of riding, the Triumph unanimously emerged as clearly the more comfortable and amenable motorcycle. Despite its highly stylized presentation, the Thruxton, like its Bonneville brethren, is perfectly willing and capable of doing whatever we asked of it. And it looked super cool doing so.



**The V7 Racer's cockpit is compacted and compressed, with dark instrumentation.**

**...while the Thruxton opens things up a bit with easy to read white-faced VDO's.**

The soft suede saddle of the Guzzi Racer, with its black plastic cowling and integrated number plate, is certainly apt for the bike's motif and perhaps more aesthetically pleasing than the Thruxton's standard Bonneville issue throne. But it's a rabbit-punch that leaves the Racer exposed. First and foremost, everyone knows suede doesn't take kindly to water exposure. Tucked under the Racer's seat is a nylon seat cover to protect it from the elements.

Like many of the Racer's accoutrements, the rear cowl exists purely for visual effect; it neither hides nor protects anything. To be fair, Guzzi does offer a couple of optional two-up seats to fit the Racer, although passenger pegs and their mounting are apparently left up to you.

So while the Thruxton's matching painted cowl may not be quite as fetching as the Guzzi's, simply unscrew two Allen bolts to remove it and what do you find? More seat, a good 12-15 inches' worth. And darned if there aren't handy pegs situated just below. The Racer makes no such arrangements.



Want to take a friend for a ride on your V7 Racer? Gee! Sorry you can't.

The bottom line is that while both bikes are certainly comely and will garner plenty of well-deserved attention, if the Racer rider wants to take a new friend out for a spin on his hot machine with its sexy suede seat, well, he's S.O.L. Meanwhile, the Thruxton rider is free to continue his café courtship somewhere down the road. This punch by the Triumph connects solidly if carrying a passenger is an integral part of your riding duties.

For the final round of our bout, it's a face-off of accessories. Both bikes offer model-specific Arrow slip-on exhaust systems purported to optimize sound as well as performance. The Guzzi's runs \$1189. Triumph offers two optional Arrows: a 2-into-1 (\$1099) or a 2-into-2 (\$1199).

The Racer scores with its groovy Record kit (\$1999.99) that includes a sexy bullet-nosed fairing to better emulate racebikes from the 1970s. The Thruxton counters with a natty headlight cowl and flyscreen with matching paint with racing stripe (\$249.99).

Finally, both marques boast closets-full of branded gear, although the array of Hinckley's clothing line far exceeds that from Italy. While Triumph wins the round on sheer volume of swag, both are as stylish as expected, and enthusiasts of each marque will surely prefer their favorite.

After a glance at the price tag, the staggered and reeling Italian (\$9990) is dancing its way to the final bell. At \$8799, the cool, practical, comfortable – and quite sexy – Triumph Thruxton costs more than a thousand dollars less than the flashy, buzzy Moto Guzzi.

## The Judges' Scorecard

While both motorcycles scored big style points, the V7 Racer, with its chrome fuel tank, racy red accents and brushed aluminium side panels, came out on top in terms of presentation. The V7 Racer also gets kudos for its surprisingly vast fuel range and the availability of its GP-throwback Record kit. But good looks only take you so far.

"While both these European contenders play in the café-racer segment, they don't quite play head to head," Duke remarks. "The Guzzi's loftier price tag and relatively Spartan accommodations makes it better suited as a second (or third) bike, its flamboyant personality able to hold its stylish head high in even high-end circles. The Racer screams that it's cool, gesticulating wildly like an Italian after a few glasses of wine."

"But," he continues, "if you're going to have just one bike in your garage, the extra power, cheaper price and more versatile platform of the Thruxton make it a more agreeable candidate."



**Alas, this was a mismatch from the opening bell. While the Racer (left) fought valiantly, it ultimately proved itself all flash and little dash, and ultimately kissed the canvas.**

Time and again, the Thruxton proved itself more than just a showpiece. Triumph's café cruiser performed not only as expected, but surpassed our expectations in long-term comfort and flexibility of application. It's a complete, well-rounded motorcycle, and therefore dons our Retro Comparo championship belt. Ding-ding.

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# Margaret River 8 and 9 December 2012

What a great weekend. Many thanks Tony and Kirsten for the hospitality and a brilliant weekend as usual



# Christmas Party

Can you see yourself here?



Many thanks to Steve and Kaylene for such a wonderful evening, and also thanks for arranging the weather to suit.

Here are some good Motorcycle web sites. Just move your mouse pointer over the item and it will show web address, then CTL Click to go to the site. (For some reason this doesn't work on the printed version.)

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[Two Wheels Magazine](#)

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## **INTERESTING MOTORCYCLE FACTS (DID YOU KNOW)**

**After he saw Honda NR750, Massimo Tamburini tore up his design for the Ducati 916 and copied all the Honda's main styling cues.**

**Lawrence of Arabia was killed while riding his Brough Superior.**

**Under its own power, Triumph's rocket III can accelerate 0-60mph at almost exactly the same rate as it would when dropped out of a plane.**

**Honda Super Blackbird riders crash, on average, once every 10 years.**

**One in five ungaraged bikes in inner cities gets stolen.**

**Insurance companies estimate that up to 25 per cent of bike theft claims are fraudulent.**

**An average of £50 from every bike insurance premium is spent on settling a relatively small number of very expensive personal injury claims.**

**On average, engineers are the most likely people to crash. Lecturers are the least likely.**

**The first monkey-style bike, the excelsior welbike, was designed to be dropped from planes with paratroopers during world war 2.**

**The highest altitude reached by a land motor vehicle under its own power is 20,065ft by two Chinese Jinlong motorcycles on Mount Everest in May 2002.**

**The world's smallest motorcyclist, Hungarian circus performer Pityu Toth, is only 2ft 4in tall.**



## THE UCARF STORY

Ulyssians have always been generous people and right from the start have opened their hearts to worthy causes. At the Wagga AGM in 1997 it was decided that in the absence of a specific alternative, the Ulysses Club would designate research into arthritis as its own preferred charity. The impetus for the choice came from the death at only 72 the previous year of Jo Dearnley who finally lost a 20-year battle against rheumatoid arthritis. Because arthritis is so slow, insidious, painful and debilitating it does not attract the same publicity as the more obvious and 'dramatic' diseases, yet not only is it by far the most common cause of painful and severe handicap in this country, it can also be deadly. In its various forms it affects nearly five million Australians and accounts for more deaths than AIDS or MS, yet because the disease is so diffuse it does not attract a lot of media attention.

In the beginning with funds were passed to the Arthritis Foundation but after some internal problems and the discovery that only a minute portion was directed to research, it was decided that the Ulysses Club would channel donations directly to the front line. Consequently the club has given significant support to a number of post-graduate students in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne and supplied their laboratories with expensive items of equipment. As the Ulysses Club Arthritis Fund we have had progress reports from the researchers themselves and direct evidence of where our contributions are being applied.

For 2011 NatCom has agreed to take this a step further by offering a full fellowship to a brilliant research scientist, Kelly McKelvie, from Otago University in Dunedin. This calls for UCARF to commit \$80,000 over the next twelve months and in return Kelly will be providing the Club with regular progress reports and updates. I hope members will have the opportunity meeting her personally at the Newcastle AGM in March. With research now moving to the forefront of genetic and molecular biology I would like to feel that the Ulysses Club was taking a lead in unlocking the secret of auto-immune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis; in looking for a cure, not just another palliative measure.

### Stephen #1

The fund raising continues in 2012-13 with the Annual Raffle and all members are asked to sell at least one book each. Tickets are \$2 each with a book containing 20 tickets.

Each branch will ask its respective members to nominate how many books they'll sell and will then order the required quantity from Head office administration.

So come on fellow Ulyssians – get behind our own worthwhile cause and let's try and top all previous records for the amount of funds raised. You never know the research may lead to the ease of the suffering of one of your loved ones in the future.

This year there is a fantastic set of prizes:

- 1st prize - Honda VT750S including ORC (Value \$9500)
- 2nd prize - A trip for 2 people to the Australian Superbike Championship at Phillip Island in 2013 including 3 night's accommodation, car hire and 2 tickets to the VIP area. Value \$3300 (conditions apply) Sponsored by QBE.
- 3rd Prize - 12/240V Cooler / Warmer with cover from Classic Industries- Value \$425

**The Raffle will be drawn during the AGM Event at Fraser Coast**

**Spence # 53780**

## A LITTLE LIGHT HUMOUR

**Q: What is the height of stupidity?**

**A: 2 men sitting on a motorcycle & fighting for a window seat!**

**Three vampires walk into a bar. The bartender looks at them suspiciously, but decides to serve them anyway.**

**"What'll it be, boys?"**

**The first vampire says "Blood. Give me blood."**

**The second vampire says "I too vish for blood!"**

**The third vampire says "Give me a plasma."**

**The Bartender smiles and says "Got it. Two bloods, and a blood-light."**

**Several days ago as I left a meeting at a hotel; I desperately gave myself a personal TSA pat down.**

**I was looking for my keys.**

**They were not in my pockets. A quick search in the meeting room revealed nothing.**

**Suddenly I realized I must have left them in the car. Frantically, I headed for the parking lot.**

**My husband has scolded me many times for leaving the keys in the ignition.**

**My theory is the ignition is the best place not to lose them. His theory is that the car will be stolen.**

**As I burst through the door, I came to a terrifying conclusion. His theory was right. The parking lot was empty.**

**I immediately called the police. I gave them my location, confessed that I had left my keys in the car, and that it had been stolen.**

**Then I made the most difficult call of all, "Honey," I stammered; I always call him "honey" in times like these. "I left my keys in the car, and it has been stolen."**

**There was a period of silence. I thought the call had been dropped, but then I heard his voice.**

**He barked, "I dropped you off!"**

**Now it was my time to be silent. Embarrassed, I said, "Well, come and get me."**

**He retorted, "I will, as soon as I convince this policeman I have not stolen your car."**

