

## **Why do you live where you do?**

What in the devil does this have to do with drag racing ? Everything.

People who like to snow ski live where there is snow. People who like boats live near water. Get the picture. Drag racing is no different. If you really like drag racing then you live where you can get to a racetrack.

There are always exceptions, if you own a business or you have to live somewhere because of your job. Remember this though, drag racing is a very competitive environment and as such if you give only a slight advantage to a competitor they can take advantage of this. In the US I have known several very serious racers who have relocated just to improve their points gathering opportunities. In 1990 Bill Barney, a winning TAD California racer moved to the southeast USA to increase his points chances and since this location gave him more access to more races it improved his income opportunities there as well.

Not everyone in Australia can move to the Brisbane area (we hope) but if you were a serious racer why not move to the Brisbane area.

You have a race track that is in the top 12-15 race tracks in the world and I should know as I have race at over 50 different tracks in the USA and Australia. The track management has drag racing vision and is a leader in new and progressive successful ideas. Almost not a month goes by without some kind of improvement or upgrade at Willowbank.

The weather is very good (The Sunshine State) and there is a lot of racing infrastructure in the Brisbane area. Most local towns near a drag race track would prefer the racetrack would close. Willowbank is different. The relationship between Willowbank and the Ipswich city council is one of mutual recognition of the value of each other. Watch the Winternationals become a event rivaling the Indy carnival or the Melbourne F1 and the state or federal government doesn't put money into the Winternationals.

And for the bracket racers there are several smaller tracks around as well that allows a lot of racing the year round.

There are other tracks in Australia that is not too bad but they are not operated with drag racing in mind and as such are not well run for the drag racer in mind. To be world class competitive you need a world class competitive environment. To be world class competitive you need racing infrastructure to support you. As the racer base grows and it is now, you will find even more racing infrastructure will develop. There will be more parts suppliers with parts on the shelf, more hardware manufacturers, more car builders, more trailer builders all to supply more racers who have decided that they have to go to where the racing is. How many have already moved to the Brisbane area?

I would like to see 10 racetracks all across Australia just like Willowbank but the reality is that it is not there now, and Willowbank is. To beat the tough racers you have the same opportunities they do and you have to race against them to measure yourself.

I always like to race someone who is real fast in the next lane just so I can compare what my car does compared to his. We may have the same ET at the end. But did he or I make moves in the middle of the track that may not be shown on the sequential timing on the ET slip? I would never have know this had I not raced him on that day, on that track, in that air. To be fast you must race against the fast racers on a fast track.

Some day there will be a True World Champion, and I want them to be one of us, and I want to help them do it.

Ken Lowe.