

Wired For Sound ...

■ Words & photos: Ron Macdonald, 2010-11 New Member Champion



Being a relatively new kid on the block (yet to complete my first year) I am still very much learning the ropes regarding our monthly Club runs (though I haven't missed one as yet).

One thing that I had been considering for several months was the purchase of a UHF citizen band radio, which several of the Club members use to keep in contact during the run.

Now my thought on this was that it would add that extra little bit to the day, listening to (and maybe joining in on) the banter as we tootle along. However, my first "wired" run proved to be much more than I had expected.

It is true that there was some light-hearted banter (*though not from those two truck drivers on the Short and Sweet Saturday Arvo run in early May!*), however I also found that quite a deal of very valuable information was also being passed.

Not only did the radio chat make me fully aware of where the lead car, middle car and "tail end Charlie" car were (comparing the radio traffic to the run notes), the lead car was also calling out possible hazards such as oncoming traffic, loose gravel and cyclists on narrow roads.

I feel that this fairly inexpensive purchase has added dramatically to my enjoyment of the day and would suggest to those that are regular run attendees to consider availing themselves of this handy little piece of kit.

My personal installation consists of a 40-channel (5W) Oricom in-dash unit connected to a ground-independent whip antenna mounted on *Gracie's* tail. The CB fits perfectly into the dash just below my AM/FM radio – requiring NO extra holes – and it was easy to pick up a live wire and earth from the AM/FM radio's wiring. The antenna co-ax was run through existing holes in the boot and routed along the underside of the centre console (simply poked under the lip).

The antenna was even easier; in deciding to fit this unit I had also decided that I did not want any new holes, so I simply unscrewed the chrome hardtop "Frankenstein" mounts (NA and NB models), slid a "Z" bracket underneath and retightened the screws. Being the tosser that I am, I did paint the "Z" bracket Grace Green but, if you discount that, the entire installation took maybe an hour.

All up cost was \$199.00 ... not a lot of money in the scheme of things, though you could easily use a hand held unit and reduce the outlay considerably.

The Club does have hand-held "loaners" available on most runs, so if you are considering this path see Murray or Janette (or the convenors of the various Chapters) at the start of your next run and get an idea of what you are missing before you invest.

There's no obligation to talk; just listen in and be part of the fun. ■



*Top: the in-dash installation ... fits like a glove.
Above: the aerial.*