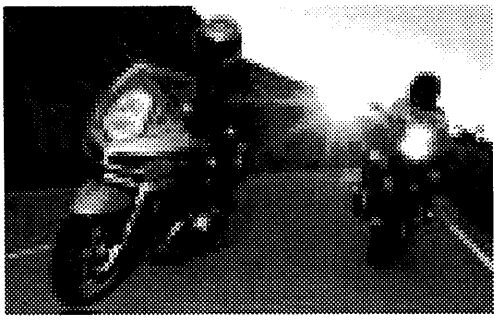
Cleveland Club News

The Official Publication of the BMW Motorcycle Owners of Cleveland Spring 2005

Where Sports Meets Touring: 2005 BMW R1200ST

Reprinted from the AMA web site
By Lance Oliver

The sport-touring category is one of the most difficult motorcycle niches to pin down. What's the perfect sport-tourer? For some riders, it's a bike half a step removed from a track-ready sportbike. Soften the race track ergonomics a bit, throw some soft saddlebags on the back, and you're good to go for the weekend. For others, it's a machine that's half a step removed from the full-dress tourers. Comfort features such as a touring riding position, hard luggage, heated grips and other accessories are at least as important as nimble handling and responsive power.



That spread leaves a lot of room for manufacturers to miss the potential buyer's personal sport-touring target. The 2005 R1200ST is BMW's best shot at that elusive target, from the company that practically invented the concept of a factory-built sport-tourer. And while the basic menu looks familiar-boxer motor with BMW's own Telelever and Paralever suspension and optional hard saddlebags-the parts are all new.

All of which means that although the R1200ST replaces the R1150RS, which was itself an update of the R1100RS, the first in the line of fuel-injected oilhead boxers, the new bike doesn't feel like your father's sport-tourer. Doesn't look like it either.

The R1200ST is a more svelte version of the touring-oriented R1200RT that BMW introduced alongside it. The combination of creases and curves in the fairing carries on the new family resemblance, but the ST goes its own way with its most distinctive feature, the stacked headlights in the front, just above the air intake for the oil cooler. The appearance, however, doesn't prepare you for the real difference between the RT and the ST. At the presentation where BMW officials introduced both models, they kept telling us we were going to be surprised by how different the two felt, considering that both bikes share the same engine, transmission, frame and other parts. But the difference has less to do with performance than with ergonomics.

While the RT retains the classic BMW "sit up and beg" riding position, the ST folds the rider into a sporting crouch. More sporting, for example, than the RS model it replaces. Even in the highest position, the adjustable clip-on handgrips are sportbike low. The footpegs are higher, too, so legroom is reduced, even with the adjustable seat in the higher of its two positions.

BMW says the R1200ST is 55 pounds lighter than the R1150RS it replaces, and weighs 505 pounds wet, without saddlebags or other options. The lighter weight, the more aggressive riding position and the new, more powerful 1,170cc boxer engine, position the ST a few steps closer to the sporty end of the sport-touring spectrum than it RS predecessors. The ST more closely resembles the R1100S, and the BMW officials were vague about that model's future.

The R1200ST's engine is a slightly retuned version of the same boxer that debuted last year on the R1200GS adventure tourer. The ST and the more touring-oriented RT now share the same engine and six-speed transmission. The only difference is the final drive ratio.

The 1200 version of BMW's boxer eliminates the surging that some owners of previous-generation fuel-injected boxers complained about. It also now comes with a balance shaft, making it smoother than ever, and it revs more willingly to the 8,000 rpm redline.

The newest version of the boxer uses two spark plugs per cylinder, twin oxygen sensors in the head pipes, dual throttle-position sensors and a new engine management system to provide the perfect combination of spark and fuel to each cylinder.

(Continued on page 14)

Contents

Where Sports Meets Tourer.....1 & 14
The AMA's Lance Oliver rates the R1200 ST.

The Turp Report.....2
President "Turp" Cobb comments on dues and "do"s.

Schwinn Scoots In.....2
Name from the past now powered.

Capt. Darwin's Rev-olutions.....3
A man, a motorcycle, a relationship.

Ramblin' with Rose & Judy.....4
Judy Gau fills in for Rose with filling tips.

La Dolce Streeta.....5 & 6
Craig Webb includes us on a recent Italia trip.

Beemers in the Pit.....7
Susan Schoenberger invites us to another party.

AMA Vintage Days 2005.....7 & 8
New on what's happening this year.

Detroit columnist draws biker ire.....8
Dickerson proves first syllable of name correct.

Houston for July 4th.....8, 9 & 10
It was a long, hot summer ride.

Breakfast Ride Dates.....9
Dates set for East, West and South breakfast rides.

Cage hits bike on purpose.....9
Yet another example of need for caution out there.

Virginia kills helmet repeal bill.....10
The debate continues, er, un-abated.

Honda introduces navigation system for bikes.....11
Trial begins with homeland scooters.

Calendar of Events.....12&13

Holiday Party Highlights & New Members.....15

Buyers Tips for Airhead GS's.....16

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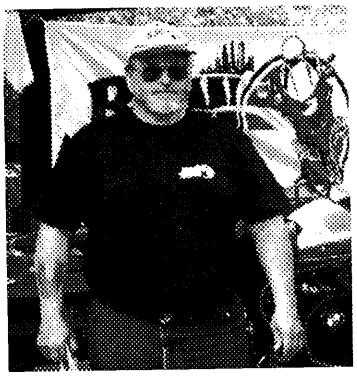
The Turp Report

By President Howard "Turp" Cobb



Welcome to springtime in Cleveland, Ohio. Here in Lorain we have to be careful to not park under a tree or overhead wires as the ice falling from them is dangerous to your vehicle and yourself.

March is membership renewal month for our club. Please mail your $10.00 to Judy Gau, 1091-F, Fleetwood Drive, Sagamore Hills, OH 44067, or better yet, bring it to the April 7th meeting at Panini's Bar & Grill. Check the Calendar and plan on attending as many club functions as possible. The more, the merrier.

We have been discussing sending the Cleveland Club News by e-mail to save money on postage and printing. Currently, most of your dues goes to those two costs. Those without e-mail, or those with e-mail but who wish to continue receiving a "snail mail" copy may do so. If you have an e-mail address and haven't listed it with Membership Chairperson, Judy Gau, please do so. (jgau@alltel.net) With the money saved we can really splurge on the Holiday Party gifts!

Remember to check your tire pressure before riding this spring. Every year I "repair" a few handling complaints by adding air to the proper pressure. Also, go to a low traffic area and practice your braking and low speed handling skills. It is well worth a small investment of your time to re-acquaint yourself with the skills we need to safely amongst the "cages" we have been using this winter. I'm looking forward to meeting a lot of you at our functions this spring and summer. ■

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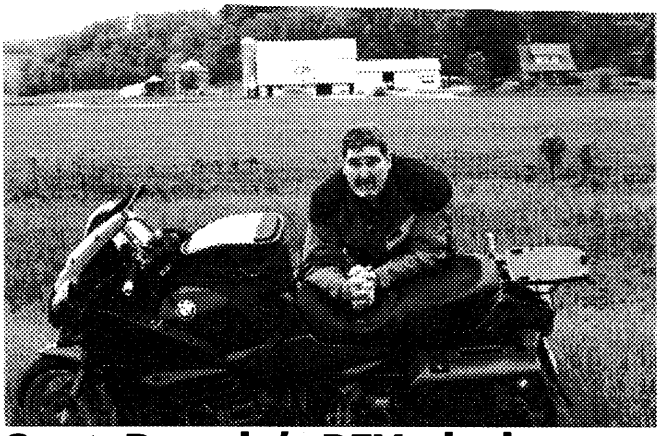

Capt. Darwin's REV-olutions

By Darwin McClellan

It's been a strange winter for me. As many of you know, I ride all winter, to work, to club meetings, to the store, or any other place I need to go. But this year has been different. The last ride in 2004 was to the club Christmas party. That was when my starter drive finally gave out on me. Ok, a lot of you are saying, So what! It's December, plenty of time to get it fixed before spring. That's not the point.

Since I bought this K-bike in 1998 I've ridden 104,000 miles and until this winter, this bike has never set for more than two days. I've often thought of how my life would have been affected if I would have known thirty years ago that someone out there was building motorcycles this dependable. Would I have been a vagabond? Riding and working at McDonalds, Zayre's or a Pure station untill I had enough money to move on and experience the next town.

Would I have been running a sidecar rig traveling with my family from place to place instead of them covering their ears and running in fear every time I pulled my 96 C.I. stroker straight piped Sportster out of the garage. Hell, I'm suprised I still wanted to continue after I rode my stock '73 Sportster to Miami and back. God, I can still feel how painfull that was. As a matter of fact, after that trip, I never took another over 300 miles one way until I bought this BMW.

I guess what I'm trying to say is this bike made a change in my life 6 yrs. ago. Margi and I have traveled more than we ever have. My son rides a K-75, my daughter's fiance rides an R90, my wife rides a Suzuki (for size reasons). Even my granddaughter Chloe has been riding with me since she was eight years old. I miss my motorcycle! It's part of me. It clears my mind and makes me smile when I leave work and see it patiently waiting in the the parking lot.

It's sometimes hard to ride straight home though, and there's always that little voice in my head that whispers "POINT IT WEST, ROLL IT ON, DON'T STOP TILL YOU GET TO COLORADO!". The Beemer's old weary and broken now , but give me a couple of fifty degree days and a few dollars and we'll be ready for another 100,000. That's if it will forgive me for ignoring it.

The breakfast ride schedule appears in this issue of the CCN so we'll be looking for you on the weekends. To start, we'll see you guys April 9th at Bob Evans Restaurant for the initial ride to the Packard Museum . Ride On,■

Schwinn Scoots In

Reprinted from Motor Cycle Industry

Dorel Industries, owner of the famous Schwinn bicycle brand, has recently launched a line of Schwinn-branded, four-stroke, gas-powered motor scooters. Schwinn reportedly introduced the first models at the Dealer Expo in Indianapolis. Three 50cc models were said to be showcased: the Campus, the Collegiate and the Graduate. Each model is available in two colors and Schwinn says they plan to launch additional models in 2005 in the 80cc or 125cc category. ■

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Ramblin' with Rose & Judy

by Judy Gau

What's In YOUR Saddlebags?

Well ladies, this column is just for the Venus riders this time. The Mars crowd can look elsewhere for some reading material, this one's just for us. Women network. So with the spring weather just around the corner, down two blocks, over the bridge and just perched on the north end of the park, it's never too early to start packing for your summer getaways. Below are a number of EXCELLENT tips from other Venus riders, that may help you find a way to take it all!

1. When packing your clothing, before rolling up the jeans, shirts, undergarments, etc., fill the legs or sleeves with added items you may think you need. Some people just don't understand the need for extra items while away from home. If you can't see the extra items, they don't exist. (Anon)

2. Every day is not a fashion statement on the road, so why not pack one or two clothing items that you were planning on giving away and/or underwear that's worn out. As items get dirty, just toss them thus saving you plenty of room for those spontaneous purchases along the way.

3. Remember, plastic bags are your staple. All sizes! Take a gallon size zip lock bags and put an outfit in it. You may have to really flatten out the items so they fit, but this way you can just grab a baggy and everything you need is in it for that day. Three days outfits, three baggies, although I would recommend the jeans be orphaned elsewhere. Take along a large heavy duty plastic bag to store your boots, helmets etc. and leave outside the tent. This way you have more room to maneuver in the already tight quarters, and if it happens to rain, they are protected. (ON Magazine)

4. Take along a cloth bag with handles, one that will fold up flat. When you head to the showers, put all your items in the bag along with your gallon size zip lock outfit for the day, and you can hang by the shower so items stay dry and together. (Anonymous seasoned rider)

5. For some riders, dreaded thoughts of having to get up during the middle of the night to make the pee run gets old and very cold. A suggest-ion from one rider was to have a pee can inside the tent. When packing your gear, put other items inside the can (before use) to minimize space. Once you've finished using your can, dispose of it smiling. I have heard some negative comments about having this can in the tent. Solution, putting it outside is much more convenient than the run to the porta-potty, or get a separate tent. (Anon.) Other seasoned riders have purchased the Travel John. A cupped opening bag with powder to chemically turn the contents into bio-degradable gel. Can use a few times before disposing. After use, put the bag inside a zip lock and store in tent. No muss, no fuss, no odor. Or the Lady J, which has an end opening that will fit a Gatorade bottle (larger opening). Use, cap the bottle, no muss not fuss, no odor. Place Lady J in Ziploc plastic bag (see more plastic bags) for future use. (Anonymous rider)

6. From the dollar store, pick up a $1 rain poncho and throw it in the bottom of your bag. If you get caught in a surprise shower with no rain gear, it looks way better than wearing a garbage bag. Also, get a couple of those mesh rubber place mats. They are great as a mat to stand on in an unfriendly shower or a welcome mat to your tent, or just a place to rest your helmet off the ground.

7. There are times that their just isn't enough space to accommodate all the items you feel you must have, or the items you will most likely purchase on your trip. Easy solution; take a back pack and wear it. If the items are clothing, makes for a great backrest for two up riders. Or roll up smaller items in your sleeping bag, extra bonus, they'll be pressed! ■

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La Dolce Streeta

By Craig A. Webb

My wife and I knew the classic Vespa would be a part of our recent trip to Sicily and Southern Italy. All the old movies and travel videos featured beautiful young couples riding pastel colored scooters and kissing in ancient piazzas. The universal allure of this visual explains British comedian, Eddie Izzard's summation of the EUROPEAN DREAM as, "Varoom, varoom – ciao!"

Upon arriving in Palermo we discovered the truth of this vision. Yes, there are comely scooter-mounted youth in every scenic streetscape. In fact, there are hundreds of them! Stoplight to stoplight traffic resembles the start of a large motocross event and sounds like a stampede of angry bees.

Vespas and Lambrettas are omnipresent, but they are outnumbered by an array of marques hailing from Eastern Europe, India, and Asia. Even ultra chic Italian motor franchises like Ducati, Aprilla and Lamborghini produce low displacement, economy models.

Economy is the operative word for this phenomenon. Gasoline costs the equivalent of over five dollars a gallon. Many Italians do not earn enough to afford cars – even the micro-cars found in Europe. Most of these scooters are only from 50 to 200c.c. displacement. There are three wheeled utility versions with delivery van or pickup bodies that may have larger engines.

Noticeably absent are larger displacement bikes. During our fourteen day tour and while seeing thousands of bikes, I remember one Ducati, one Guzzi, one Harley, one Goldwing, a small number of random jap bikes and about two dozen BMWs. Most of these were 650 Funduros. A reason for this may be expensive tax and license regulations that disfavor large displacement machines.

The weather is another factor that encourages motorcycle usage. Much of Italy has no snow and temperatures rarely drop below the 50's. Serious rain is a wintertime occurrence and riders take it in stride. Most wear standard types of pedestrian rain gear and occasionally use special waterproof skirts that cover them from the waist down while riding.

A more important factor is space. The medieval origin of most cities leaves extremely limited room for traffic and even less for parking. Even with extensive public transportation and many one way streets, city traffic is chaotic at best and stationary the rest of the time. Most four wheeled vehicles have been severely downsized in response to this problem, but the two wheeled scooter is still the best answer to the creative anarchy that is Italian urban traffic.

Streetlights are few. Parking is anywhere and everywhere you can find it – including most sidewalks. Traffic police are a national joke. While there is a bewildering arena of overlapping local, regional and national police forces, nobody seems to be assigned to traffic. Of course, after an accident occurs, all branches respond en masse complete with automatic weapons and "Ann Frank" sirens to ensure total vehicular gridlock.

I wish I had some photos of Palermo rush hour. However, it was rainy and overcast while we were there and I was hoping for better shots in Rome. Unfortunately, we were in Rome during the Christmas holidays so traffic there proved uncharacteristically light. If you think rampant lane splitting in California traffic is wild, you should see it in Palermo – on the sidewalks! (Continued on p. 6)

Check our web site www.Mathiasbmw.com

La Dolce Streeta (Cont.)

Once out in the countryside, we did not see much motorcycle traffic. Even four wheeled freeway traffic was limited. This was good because Italian freeways are narrow for the most part and even considering the mountainous terrain, unusually dependant on bridges, tunnels and elevated overpasses. We were told the reason for all this excessive over engineering was to save farmland. This may be so, but the cost of maintaining all these structures promises to be considerable. We seldom traveled more than twenty miles without encountering a major road rehabilitation project in progress. For all the money they invested in concrete, they really cheaped out on guardrails. Most were either missing or woefully inadequate to stop even the lightest vehicle from careening off the roadway.

Former newsletter editor Craig Webb in his element.

Many parts of small Italian towns are so narrow or laid out so precipitously on ancient defensive hilltops that normal traffic is impossible. Some areas are blocked off for historic or tourism reasons. The most scenic highway in southern Italy is the 26-mile Amalfi Coast Road. Its 1,200 hairpin curves along cliff edge coastal mountainsides, was engineered and built by the legions of Rome. Unfortunately, they failed to consider the needs of the average modern sedan, not to mention the turning radius of a full size tour bus.

As I said, Rome, with its three million registered cars and 700,000 registered motorcycles, was unusually quiet during our visit. Most citizens live outside the historic central city in reinforced concrete high rise apartments built since WWII. This is characteristic of most large cities where Allied bombing destroyed as much as seventy percent of the pre-war housing.

Most scooter jockeys are commuting to and from these places. Italian young people tend to live with their families until they are married and higher education is free. That means a good percentage of the attractive scooter users are on their way to college classes. However, they are not the only group using two wheels.

I saw individuals of all types and ages riding in Rome. Old ladies bringing home groceries, workmen carrying paint buckets and two by fours and young professionals with suits and brief cases, all whizzing by easily on holiday errands. This was no simple feat considering streets were wet and all were paved with 4" by 4" black volcanic cobble stones that were over four hundred years old. If that seems amazing to you, consider that our tour guide would often dismiss some lesser architectural aspect of a Roman vista by saying: "This part is new. It's only been here three or four centuries."

I would like to say that we found those perfect couples kissing on their Vespas in sunny ancient piazzas, but that was not possible. It was winter. Most riders were warmly if not protectively dressed. They all wore helmets. This is a relatively new law that met with some resistance, but which is universally followed – at least in winter. Still I saw enough lovely ladies in stiletto boots perched fashionably upon pink scooters to imagine that summer traffic in the piazzas must be very hot indeed.■

If gas prices keep rising we might see more of these vehicles right here in the Northeast USA.

Beemers in the "Pit"

By Susan Schoenberger

It's finally about that time of year for the annual BMW MOC Micro Rally. Your hosts for this event will be the New Haven HRA members. We are very pleased to have your June weekend event held at the privately owned HRA "PIT" campground.

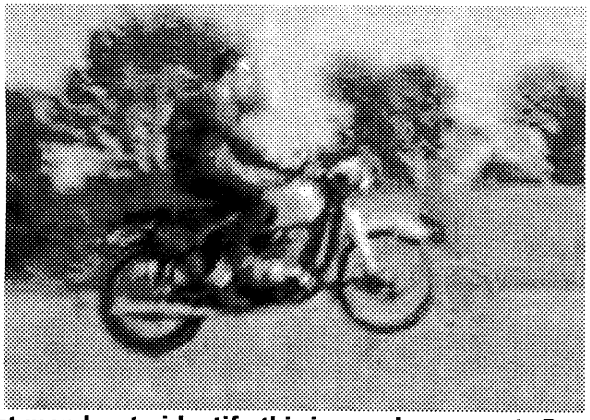
In nearby Willard there are motels for those who don't like to camp out but would still like to join in the festivities and nightly campfires. Last year around the fire we had guitar music and singing entertainment by one of our own MOC members and a guest who sang his original tunes. Anyone who knew the tunes would sing along.

On Saturday there was an organized ride and of course, the fabulous bike games plus plenty of relaxation. The kids canoed and fished in the small pond on the property. Again this year there will be a Friday night soup made by one of the HRA members and the Saturday night dinner is by reservation.

Our campground, as many of you know, is what can be fondly called "primitive chic". We are very proud of the improvements we have made to what was once a gravel pit over the past thirteen years. We are also happy to announce that there will be heated water in our showers instead of the unique, solar-powered showers of the past.

There is a large open pavilion with picnic tables. The porta potties are clean and furnished with the necessities plus hand sanitizers and candles in the evening. If needed, we'll rent more. There's plenty of space to pitch a tent or pull in a small camper, but we have no hookups.

So, whether you decide to camp or motel, please join us for the BMW MOC Micro Rally in the New Haven PIT for friendship and just plain, good-old fun in a private setting. If anyone has questions, please phone us at 419-294-5125 or e-mail to: motoduo@wcnet.org. We will try to answer any question or solve any dilemma that may arise. Roger and I look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones. ■



First member to identify this joyous jumper gets 5 MOCal points. Send entry to Don Poremski. See p. 2.

AMA Vintage Days '05

Reprinted from AMA web site

Ducati will be the "Featured Marque" at AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days 2005. In celebrating the famed Italian marque, AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days 2005 will benefit the Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum and will feature an exhibit of classic motorcycles and memorabilia.

The Grand Marshal will be Paul Smart, winner of the 200 Miles of Imola aboard a Ducati in 1972. Also, special guest and World Stunt-Riding Champion Christian Pfeiffer will be performing on his Ducati throughout the event.

The legendary Mid-Ohio circuit will again host American Historic Motorcycle Racing Association (AHRMA) roadracing throughout the weekend. Two days of AHRMA motocross plus observed trials and dirt-track racing are also on the schedule. In all, AHRMA racing events are expected to attract more than 1,500 competitors.

There will also be three vintage bike shows; the AMA Swapmeet (North America's largest); a slate of guest speakers, including Craig Vetter; demo rides offered by BMW, Ducati, Buell, Kawasaki, Suzuki, Aprilia, Moto Guzzi and Harley-Davidson; an array of vendors featuring new products from top manufacturers and dealers; the annual Motorcycle Hall of Fame Auction of motorcycles and memorabilia; a reunion of (Continued on p. 8)

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AMA Vintage Days 2005

motocross legends, in conjunction with the Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum's upcoming "Motocross America" exhibit; and the return of Tommi Ahvala's "Team Extreme" Trials Showcase.

This year marks AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days 11th annual event at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course. Motorcycles previously honored with the Featured Marque distinction include: BSA, Honda, Norton, Penton, Vincent, Indian, Spanish Motorcycles, Harley-Davidson and , most recently, BMW. ■

Detroit columnist says injured motorcyclists shouldn't be given medical treatmant

From AMA Web Site

Here we go again.

Columnist Brian Dickerson, in yesterday's edition of the Detroit Free Press, is the latest to call for motorcyclists to be de-facto organ donors. What's worse, he suggests that injured motorcyclists not be given medical treatment at all. In writing about the pending repeal of Michigan's mandatory helmet law, Dickerson says, "If only lawmakers had thought to add a requirement that all helmet-less cyclists agree to donate their organs. And why not require donorcyclists to sign papers declining extraordinary lifesaving measures, so that deserving organ recipients aren't kept waiting unnecessarily?"

Dickerson doesn't stop there. He lumps motorcyclists in with "champions of the right to die," including shameless and insulting references to Jack Kevorkian and Terri Shiavo.

We've seen this sort of hysterical, uninformed opinion before, of course. Last September, Chicago Sun-Times columnist Neil Steinberg characterized riders as organ donors in a column headlined "Hop on a motorcycle, fill out your donor card" - and your e-mails to Mr. Steinberg prompted him to admit in a later column that he wrote without knowing the facts. Earlier, the AMA joined motorcyclists nationwide in defeating actual legislative proposals in New Mexico and California that would've required motorcyclists to be organ donors.

But by suggesting that injured motorcyclists be left to die, Dickerson has set an all-time low -- and the AMA has told him so. If you'd like to let him know how you feel, you can reach him at dicker@freepress.com.■

Houston for July 4th

By Don Poremski

Take a lot of elements like: being out of work, needing to see a brother in Texas, having a sister about half way there, wondering just how great a tourer an RT is (that darned Larry Cardo making everyone jealous of his long rides), riding being cheaper than flying, and the decision to take a fifteen hundred mile trip seemed like realizing the obvious. So, okay it's off to Houston via Madisonville, Kentucky.

It was summer, but the Suvanuzzi needed rubber and Beeming Bettie hadn't really shown me her stuff since being purchased. Wiser heads advised to remove the fairing lowers, but a makeshift solution was thought to be the equal of the professional, but costly, air deflectors. Not heeding that advice would prove to be the source of annoyance, discomfort and more.

There would be a lot of slab this trip, so route 62S was the only exception to the drone of the superhighway. That is a good median route to Columbus until just outside the city limits by about twenty miles. At that point it was find the way to the beltway (Cont. on p. 9)

Houston (Cont. from p. 8)

then onto Interstate 71 all the way through Cincinnati to Louisville. Belt around town to I65 to Elizabethtown and the Western Kentucky Parkway would get me close to Sis, a hot meal and a comfy bed. That 490 miles was not the longest one-day, but the morrow would prove to be a real challenge and personal best.

With breakfast warm in my belly the first task was to find the Purchase Parkway to Union City. From there it would be Route 51 to Memphis. Bad choice. Should have gone farther west to I55. Would have saved about two hours worth of hot traffic. Sought out I55 so I could drop due south through Jackson and Brookhaven to the Louisiana line and below to I12 to Baton Rouge. Now we're talking HEAT, son...and rain.

The choice of equipment was a perforated leather jacket with liner and a set of Frogg Toggs. Quickly disposed of the former and was glad for the latter. The light color and voluminous body of the jacket saved a sunburn even if it wasn't the safest for a fall. The discomfort of the heat made taking risks seem acceptable.

Keeping track of mileage for (Continued on p. 10)

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East Location-- Bob Evans Restaurant, 6100 Som Center Road (Rts. 422 & 91)

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West Location-- Steak & Shake, 5300 Abbe Road (Rts. 254 & 301)

April 17 & 23, May 15 & 28, June 19 & 25, July 17 & 23, August 21 & 27, September 18 & 24, October 16 & 22.

South Location-- Farmer Boy Restaurant, 1324 Canton Road (Rts. 224 & 91)

April 10 & 16, May 8 & 21, June 12 & 18, July 10 & 16, August 14 & 20, September 11 & 17, October 9 & 15.

Ride attendees should arrive in time to eat breakfast before departing at approximately 9:00 a.m. Rides are free-style with leaders volunteering their best/most favorite loop rides. Remember, the more riders, the more MOCal points for both leaders and followers. ■

Driver Charged with Hitting Motorcyclist on Purpose

From AMA Web Site

Police say a 19-year-old car driver intentionally ran into a father and young son riding a motorcycle. Police arrested Jacob Hyneman, of Kent, Washington, in the incident. Officials said Hyneman was driving in Lakewood, WA when he got into an argument with his girlfriend, who was a passenger in the car. The girlfriend allegedly pointed to a motorcycle ridden by Pat Doyle and his 8-year-old son, Alex, and made some comment about her ex-boyfriend and wondered it that were him on the bike.

Hyneman allegedly became enraged, ran a red light and intentionally hit the motorcycle, then sped off. Doyle and his son apparently weren't seriously hurt, although Pat reportedly doesn't remember anything about the crash. The case remained unsolved for several days until the girlfriend reported the incident to police. Hyneman was charged with vehicular assault and failure to stay at the scene of an injury accident.

The AMA will be following this case as part of our Justice for All program, which hopes to get laws passed in all 50 states to get appropriate penalties for those who kill or injure others on the road. (Join. ed) ■

Houston (Cont. from p. 9)

gas stops meant noticing and recording the mileage markers at the beginning of each new highway. The odometer on this bike is really erratic; sometimes recording nothing, sometimes skipping the units, tens and hundreds in favor of the thousands and ten-thousands. During the stop just west of Baton Rouge the mileage was really mounting up and it was well into the evening. Better call ahead to notify of the late arrival.

One consequence of wide spread use of cell phones must be that pay phones are becoming scarce, even in state-run rest stops. Tried two with no success and had to pull off the highway into a gas station to find one. The Texas border was before me and the rain looked as if it would stay away for at least another hour.

For some reason I never recorded in my mind just how big Texas is, but when I got to the border and noted the first mile marker, it said 880. So, from the Sabine River to the Rio Grande via Route 10 it would take as long as I had ridden the entire day from Madisonville! That there's a fer piece, pardner.

Got in about 11:30 p.m. wishing I had purchased my Anti-Monkeybutt powder before departure. How do the Iron Butt guys (and Larry Cardo) do it? Yeah, it was cool to tool around Houston with Ohio tags and have folks exclaim about what a hard case I must be. Knowing the whole trip had to be reversed had me wondering about just how hard I was.

With a week in Texas to rest up, including a lesson in how NOT to ignite a bottle rocket, the trip back had to be planned. There was no sense of urgency so it would be Route 59 from Houston to Marshall, then 79 through Arkansas back to Memphis. This was a really nice segment of the ride. It took me through the countryside that most travelers miss and let me encounter the local folks. Stayed on it all the way to Clarksville and beyond which would take me back into Kentucky.

Got back on the slabs near Bowling Green (65) and retraced my way back through Louisville, then 71 to Cincinnati, Columbus and 76 near Wadsworth back home. All that heat cooked the battery and my left leg. The battery died, my leg is still with me.

So, are we talking Iron Butt, Four Corners, 50CC and the like for future recreation. I think not. If prodded with the right stimulus I might do a 700, even a 750, but I do believe I've seen the last of my 900 mile days in the saddle...Anti Monkeybutt powder notwithstanding. ■

Virginia House Kills Motorcycle Helmet Bill

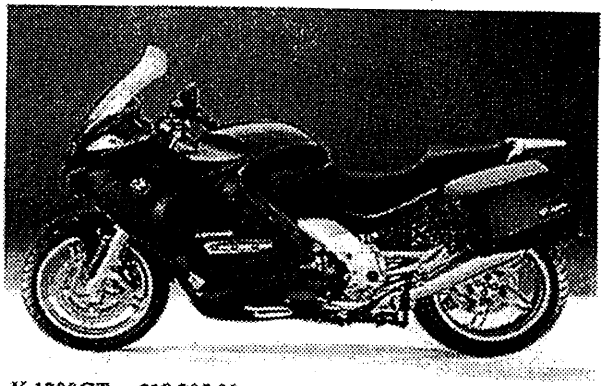
From Motor Cycle Industry Magazine

The Virginia House of Delegates voted 51-46 to kill legislation that would have repealed the state's helmet mandate for bikers 21 and older. It reportedly marked the fourth year in a row that bills to relax the helmet law have failed a close floor vote after clearing committee.

Delegate William R. Janis, Republican, says the law is maternalist. "It is the nature of mommies to protect their children from skinned knees and bruised foreheads, but it should not be the nature of the legislature of the Commonwealth of Virginia to do it." he said.

Opponents of the bill are said to argue that much more serious injuries than scrapes and bruises result from riding without a helmet and that the taxpayers often have to pay the health care costs of bikers who suffer brain damage or spinal injuries. (We've heard this untruth before, but it never seems to die. Still, I nearly always have a lid on, don't you? ed.) ■

Available for test rides. Are You?



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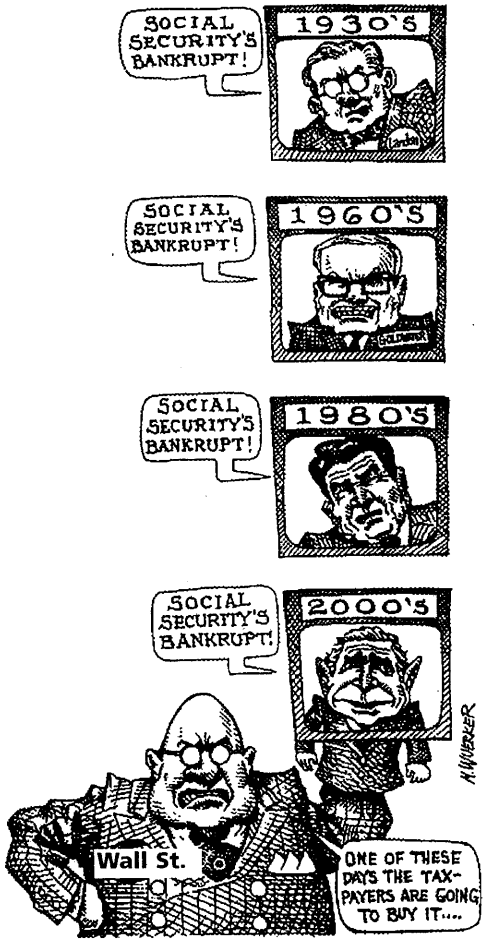

REMEMBER!

When visiting our advertising vendors, mention that you saw their ad in the CCN!

Springtip No. 2: Make sure you provide signals to traffic in time for them to react. Turn off those turn signals and indicate to following traffic when you apply brakes.

Honda to Introduce Nav System for Motorcycles

Reprinted from Motor Cycle Industry

Honda Motor Co. says they will release Japan's first navigation system for motorcycles in their domestic market. The navigation system reportedly sports a 3.8 inch panel screen and will be installed for Honda's Forza large scooters, attaching to the center of the handlebars. Honda says the system will have voice directions as well as showing a map. ■

Springtip No. 1: Don't linger in a blind spot. Few cage drivers bother to perform a "head check" before changing lanes. Don't change lanes into a blind spot either.

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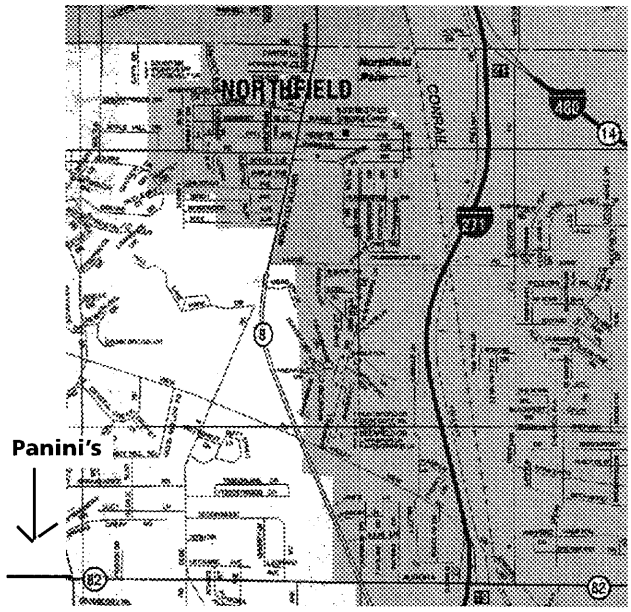
Calendar of Events

April 7

BMW MOC Membership Meeting

7:00 p.m. Held at Panini's, 480 West Aurora Road, Sagamore Hills (Northfield) OH 44067-2199. Tel. 330-468-6200.



April 9

Packard Museum/Breakfast Ride

Meet at East Breakfast Ride location, Bob Evans Restaurant, 6100 Som Center Road (Rts. 422 & 91) at 9:00 a.m. Ride will be to the Packard Museum in Warren to see the "Motorcycle Milestones of the 20th Century" display. This will be the **first 2005 Breakfast Ride.**

April 9

Breakfast Rides Return

There are three locations that act as the meeting spots for pickup rides on the weekends. They always fall on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th weekends of the month. April 9th as above will be the start for 2005. This has become the ride to the Packard Museum in Warren. We'll go and maybe pick up a state park or memorial or two along the way. We'll meet at Bob Evans Restaurant, 6100 Som Center Road, Cleveland, 440-248-4045. Look for the balance of the schedule in this issue of the CCN.

April 15-16

National BMW Open House Dates

Contact your favorite BMW dealer for demo rides.

April 16

Kirt Zautner Memorial Spring Tune-Up Clinic

Hosted by Pres "Turp" Cobb at his business, Cobb BMW and H-D Repair, 1301 Brownell Ave., Lorain, OH. 9:00 a.m. until ?. Same set up as last year. Coffee, soft drinks and grill available for folks. Spectro oil, tranny and final drive fluids, Fram and K & N filters for the bikes. Help available for tuneups including carb balancing. We have tools and lifts. Those wishing to order tires or accessories, get your orders in two weeks before event. Members may bring their own tires, parts and supplies. Restaurants nearby. Kibitzers, helpers, advisers welcome. Call 440-244-6881 with questions.

April 22-24

RA Mt. Vernon Campout

Season operner at Kokosing Valley Camp, 1/2 mile west of Millwood, OH (US 36 & US62). Go to Area "B". Many welcome amenities, restaurants nearby. $5 per person per night brings water and electricity to each site. Adult beverages permitted. Come and enjoy. Camp phone 740-599-7056.

April 30 to May 2

31st Sturgis Mini Rally

Hosted by the BMW Motorcycle Club of Battle Creek at Green Valley Campground, Sturgis, MI. $12 at gate, no pre-registration, includes coffee, donuts, tea, hot chocolate all weekend. Subs and pizza sold on grounds or can be ordered for dinner. Good restaurants in the area. Door prizes and awards. Sun. morning pancake breakfast fit for a king/queen. Hot showers, inside and outside eating areas, firewood and $1 miniature golf. Motels for non-campers nearby. Located 1.25 miles south of US12 on Hwy. 66. Lake Fawn River Road (2 mi. north of Lake Rd.). Campground will be 1.5 miles west on Fawn River Rd. Info: Carol Blackmore 269-965-1673 or Sandy Lincoln 269-966-6660, sanlin2k@aol.com, or Joyce Baines 269-979-1969, or Connie Cadwell bccadwell@accessus.net.

May 5

BMW MOC Membership Meeting

7:00 p.m. at the Strawberry Lane Picnic Area in Metro Parks North Chagrin Preservation off Chardon Road (US6) east of SR91. BYO.

May 28

BMW MOC Board Meeting

7:00 p.m. at Judy Gau's residence, 1091-F Fleetwood Drive, Sagamore Hills, OH, 44067. Tel. No. 330-467-2620.

June 3-5

BMW MOC Micro Rally and Membership Meeting

At "The Pit", a private motorcycle campground just south of New Haven, OH. Camping $6.00 per person per night. Friday soup pot, continuous coffee, tea, pop and hot chocolate. Club membership meeting at 4:00 p.m. Saturday in pavilion. Primitive camping, portapotties, **hot showers**, fishing pond, bonfire, field events. Week-end package includes two nights camping and steak feed on Sat. night for $22.00. Feeds need to be prepaid. Call Darwin for more information at 216-631-0851.

July 7

BMW MOC Monthly Meeting

7:00 p.m. Location to be announced.

Calendar of Events

June 12
Ride for Kids
Benefits the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation. 90% of every dollar goes to research and family programs. Start location Rocky River High School. Registration opens at 7:00 a.m. Rain or shine. $35. Mark Huhlenfeld at 1-800-253-6530

July 15-17
AMA Vintage Days at Mid-Ohio
The popularity of this event just seems to grow and grow. Held at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course near Lexington, OH, the weekend includes racing, bike show, seminars and a huge swap meet.Ducati will be the featured marque and Paul Smart will be the Grand Marshall. More in the Spring CCN

July 15-17
Hocking Hills Rhythm & Blues Fest
Three days jam packed with music and fun. This event will feature ten outstanding Rhythm & Blues bands. Come and stay the whole weekend and enjoy what The Woods At Kaeppner Place has to offer. If you ride a motorcycle in, you camp for free. 34070 Sutton Rd., Logan OH 43138. Contact: William Kaeppner at 740-385-3885 or go to www.kaeppnerwoods.com.

July 21-24
BMW MOA International Rally
The rally will be held in Lima, Ohio this year. More information available at PO Box 3982, Tel. 636-394-7277 or on-line at www.bmwmoa.org.

July 22-24
AMA Superbike Racing at Mid-Ohio
Maybe some of the folks at the MOA rally will travel to Mid-Ohio to spectate at some excellent motorcycle competition. More as the season progresses.

July 28
BMW MOC Board Meeting
Location to be announced.

August, 2005
Annual March of Dimes Ride
Bikers for Babies, AMA sanctioned scenic 35 mile ride with fun, food, entertainment and sruprises at the end. Details to come.

September 1
BMW MOC Membership Meeting
7:00 p.m. Location to be announced.

September 29
BMW MOC Board Meeting
7:00 p.m. Location to be announced.

October 6-9
BMW RA International Rally
32nd International Rally, 33rd Annual BMW RA Rally in Shelbyville, TN. Make your vacation plans now to "Ride with the RA" in one of the most interesting parts of the USA. Another true "Riders Rally" is in store. More information to come. See the BMW RA web site at www.bmwra.org for additional news releases.

October, 2005
Annual BMW MOC Dealer Poker Run
Starting at Sill's Motor Sales, 1901 Brookpark Road, Cleveland, OH, 44109-5811, Tel. 216-749-1363. First bikes out at 9-ish. We will visit all existing dealers. The run will take most of the day, about 300 miles in length, ending at All Seasons.

October 6
BMW MOC Membership Meeting
7:00 p.m. Location to be announced.

October, 2005
BMW MOC Fall Foliage Folly
A "gathering of the clubs" at Whispering Hills Campgrounds near Shreve, OH during peak autumn color change & in one of the best riding areas in Ohio. All Ohio BMW clubs are invited. If Bob Wood can make it happen, the Saturday Feast will once again require advance reservations. Clam Bake Dinner includes: one dozen cold water Rhode Island Top Neck Clams, 1 1/4 lb. seasoned BBQ chicken, sweet potato, ear of sweet corn, cole slaw, roll and butter. Cabins and RV reservations can be had, too. Call the campground at 800-992-2435. Dates still tentative due to proximity to RA Rally. Volunteers most welcome. Stay tuned.

Sport Meets Touring (continued)

Another piece of new technology employed on the R1200ST is the electrical system, which greatly reduces the number of wires. Two controllers, connected by a pair of copper wires, manage all the electrical devices, from the engine management system to lights. The System requires no fuses. If something malfunctions, the controller shuts down power to that system.

Unlike the RT's electronically adjustable windscreen, the ST has a smaller shield that's adjusted by hand. No tools are needed. In fact, you can reach out with one hand and snap the shield upward into its highter position while riding. There's not much need to change it, however. There's minimal difference in airflow between the two settings. In either setting, the wind swirling across the shield creates some odd whistling effects. I found it made sense just to keep the shield down, which locks it into the most stable position and fits the sporty feeling of the bike.

Even the ST's seat leans more toward sport than touring, with a sculpted appearance that reduces the size of the seating area but encourages more movement by the rider.

The ST also has the servo-assisted brakes BMW has been putting on late model boxers, but ABS is an option. The brakes provide two-finger stopping, but the feel is definitely different, thanks to the servo assist. The power boost works whenever the key is on, whether the engine is running or not. A good thing to remember when moving the bike around, because braking power is reduced considerably without the power assist.

Add it all up, and the ST keeps a strong resemblance to its big brother, the RT, as you'd expect, since they share so much running gear. But the ST has its own look and feel, thanks to the styling and the ergonomics.

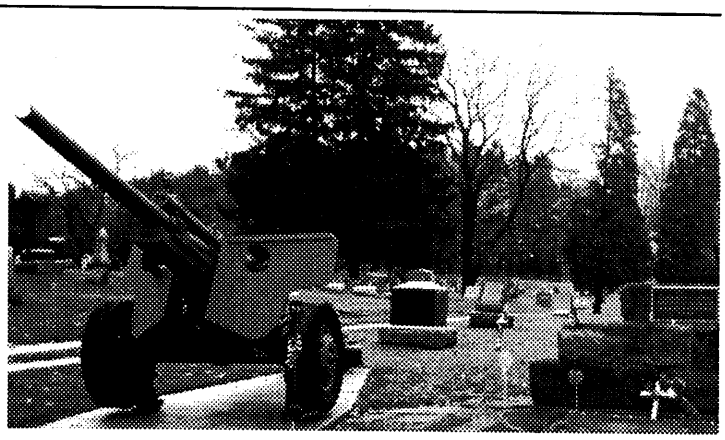
The ST also differentiates itself through pricing. With an MSRP of $14,990, it significantly undercuts the RT's$18,240 base price. But a lot of that savings comes from eliminating accessories that come standard on the RT, such as anti-lock brakes, locking saddlebags, heated handgrips and the new Electonic Suspension Adjustment, a $750 option that allows the rider to adjust suspension settings from the cockpit on the fly.

For BMW, the RT model has been, and will continue to be, the company's bread and butter in the United States. It may seem odd, but because the ST aims for the center of the sport-touring spectrum, it will undoubtedly draw fewer fans than the BMW offerings on each side of it. The middle of the road is often a forgotten place in today's motorcycle market.

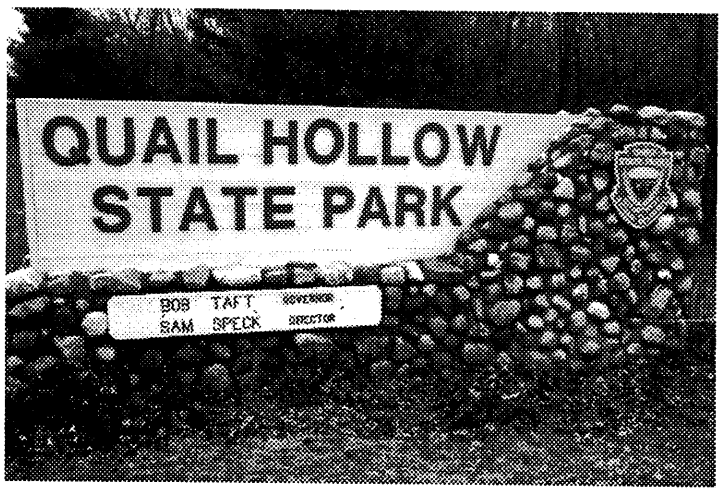
Some riders will see the ST as an uncomfortable touring bike. With the clip-ons in the lower settings, the riding position resembles that of some of the softer-edged 600cc supersport bikes on the market. BMW will steer those riders toward the RT, which adds a lot of comfort while giving up very little performance capability.

Other riders will view the ST as a sporty bike with not quite enough power for its posture. The new boxer twin is a definite improvement, but it still can't equal the output of some of the liquid-cooled, multi-cylinder competition. BMW will steer those buyers toward its new K1200S, which makes about 52 percent more power than the ST. Are you the man (or woman) in the middle? If so, BMW has an offer for you.

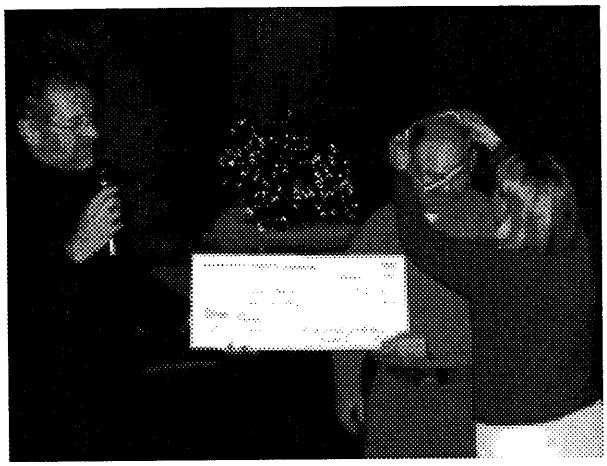
Watch for a further review of the R1200ST and R1200RT in a future issue of American Motorcyclist magazine. ■



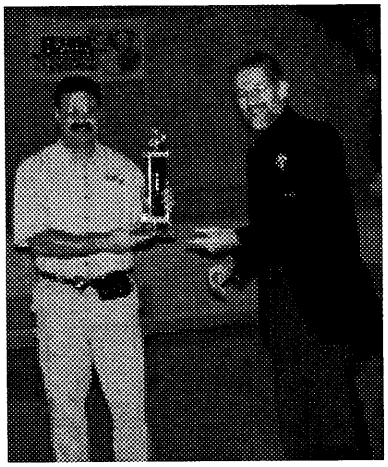
Put your bike in a photo like that above or below and you'll get three MOCal points for the effort. State parks should be fairly easy to locate, but memorials are going to require a sharp eye. Points for 2005 started with the Holiday Party, so keep your bike at the ready for those warm days to come and GET OUT THERE!



Holiday Party 2004 Photos



MOCal points winner, Mike Kiesel, receives $200 and a medallion from admiring wife Sharon.



First MOCal runner-up goes to George Lopez.

Second runner-up went to Carl Bork.

Bob Shelton looks a little reluctant to give up a bodacious 50/50 to Judy Gau.

Carl Bork won the $100 gift certificate from MOC, open soon.

Judy Gau was also awarded the "Golden Schwing" plaque for membership chair.

Welcome to the New Members

Robert Baron of Brunswick, **Robert Beason** of Sandusky, **Mark Belli** of Macedonia, **Dianne Biddlestone** of Cleveland, **Bob Chalfant** of Cleveland, **Susan Davis** of Chagrin Falls, **Cheryl Fallis** of Lorain, **Dennis Grossman** of Shaker Heights, **Ed & Heather Gamuscian** of Cleveland, Jacques Girouard of Westlake, **Ron Immerman** of Shaker Heights, **Bob Kosicki** of Garfield Heights, **Nancy Kramer** of Chagrin Falls, **Mark Kulesza** of Brecksville, **Bill Langan** of Cleveland Heights, **Doug Lauderman** of Norwalk, **Colleen Lopez** of Parma, **Bob Masowich** of S. Amherst, **Joyce and Mike McGahhey** of Willard, **Doug McGee** of Upper Sandusky, **Fred and Cindy Meyer** of Cuyahoga Falls, **Linda Moore** of Maple Heights, **Joe Nagel** of Parma, **Michael Nahas** of Bedford Heights, **Dan Naugle** of Ashland, **Mike Neeson** of N. Olmstead, **Stephen Palek** of Cleveland, **Erica Petras** of Avon Lake, **Bruce Piontkowski** of Macedonia, **Tim Pitts** of Fairview Park, **Melanie Routzahn** of Cleveland, **Wayne Slepecky** of Medina, **Michael Stroup** of Mayfield Village, **Charlie Telliard** of Chagrin Falls and **Dale Weir** of Huron.

(Great to have you. Now, let's RIDE! -ed.)

Buyers Tips for Used Airhead GS BMW's

Excerpted from "Buyer's Guide for Used "Airhead" BMW GS by Dr. Gregory W. Frazier as it appeared in the April issue of Motorcycle Consumer News

You have long lusted after the celebrated air-cooled BMW GS models featured in the 'round the world adventure travel stories, last produced in 1995. You are looking at the used motorcycle section of the newspaper, on eBay or used motorcycle websites. Being a faithful MCN reader, you've read the most recent "Used Bike Value Guide." Maybe you have also peeked at your dealer's copy of the N.A.D.A. Consumer Motorcycle /Snowmobile /ATV /Personal Watercraft Appraisal Guide (888)-232-6232.

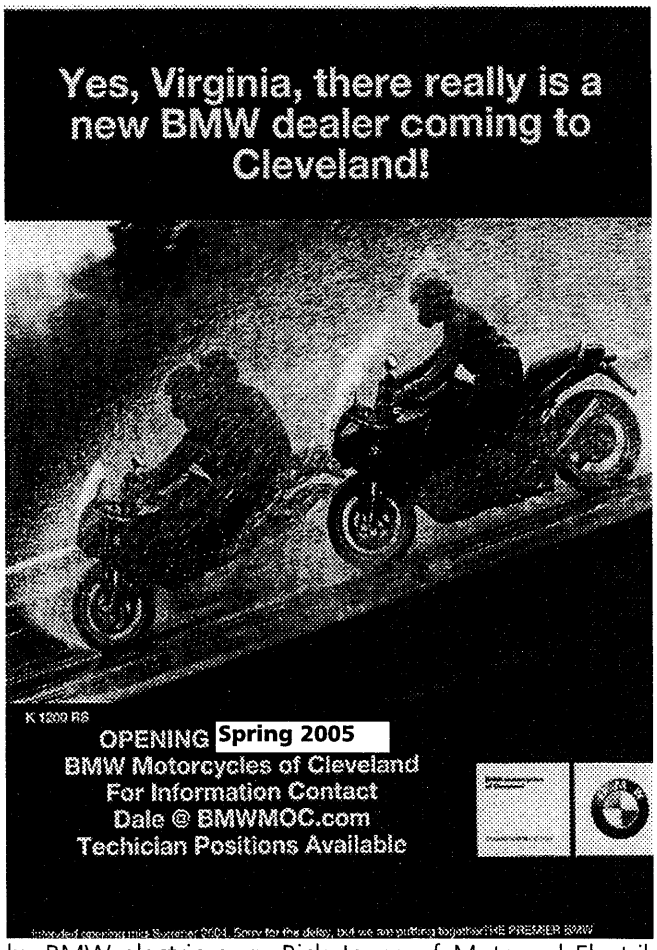
What you immediately discover is the numbers for what the GS is supposed to retail for and what sellers are asking don't match. In fact, they are not even close. Are the used bike guides wrong?

Nope, their numbers are based on a formula that closely approximates the bargain hunter's Rule of Thumb for used bikes 15 years old or older, that being about $1 per cc. For a 1981 R80GS, an 800-cc model, the N.A.D.A. price for a "rough trade-in, wholesale" is $875, which is pretty close to the $800 Rule of Thumb. But, asking prices for that bike can be as high as $8,000.

Part of the void between theory and reality is the intangible of "image" or "cult." A popular misconception is that the GS was ready for long treks as sold from the showroom floor. For those of us who have been stranded in some of the ugliest places on the globe, like Bogota, Colombia during an Anti-American media campaign, we know the airhead GS-series has serious shortcomings. While magazines published stories and photographs of some of us flogging our GS bikes around the world, they seldom published the stories of our breakdowns.

Subsequently, the BMW-GS air-cooled series (1981-1995) gained a reputation, deserved or not, as being a rock-solid adventure tourer. This reputation, coupled with the discontinuation, slowly created a demand that exceeded the supply and the cult factor.

Some of the things you should look for if you are in the market are as follows. Starting with the electrical system, if the GS you're looking at is a 1981-1992 model, it came with a coil fondly called a "Crackomatic"



by BMW electric guru Rick Jones of Motorrad Electrik. The one-piece coils are known to crack and when water finds its way into the innards, the motorcycle sputters or stops. An aftermarket replacement is $80 vs. $130 for the OEM. Rotors and diode boards have also been known to frequently fail. Might want to replace that voltage regulator, too.

Monolever rear ends seem to be okay, but once the company switched to the Paralever drive shaft, life expectancy dropped from 100,000-to infinity for the Monolevers to "you are riding on borrowed time after 30,000 miles" for the Paralevers.

With both the R80 and the R100 models what is true is that they are not making them any more, and that factor coupled with the cult factor make the line in the sand invisible to anyone other than yourself. Wherever you draw it, the two rules you should remember are: A fool and his money are easily parted," and "Buyer Beware". Motorrad Electrik, 256-442-8886 or www.motoelekt.com. (Complete article from Ian Smith Information, 303-777-2385) ■