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**On The Cover:**

Our Forty-Eight & C-Spec at the secret *CityBike* roadhouse (photo: Angelica Rubalcaba); Terry Otton (Ramspur Winery) & Randy Kremlacek (CFTA), two of the brains behind the Santa Rosa Mile (photo: Jeff Ebner).

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Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba

# News, Clues & Rumors

Homecoming: the SFMC reopened their clubhouse on July 30th, after over a year of work restoring flood damage caused by Stormageddon 2014.

## 2016 CMSP Meeting—Be There, Be Square, Or At Least Dial In

Around this time every year, we start yakkin' about the importance of significant rider presence at the Annual CMSP Advisory Committee meeting in The Sac: "Hey guys, it'd be really great if some of you would show up this year." And then after the meeting, we bitch about how no one showed up: "Lots of seats to choose from... where were you guys?"

The 2016 meeting is at 10 AM on October 5<sup>th</sup>, at CHP HQ at 601 N 7th St, Sacramento, CA 95811. You have to ask for a spot to attend up front by calling (916) 843-3000.

This year, we're not just gonna encourage our readers to attend; we're organizing a ride up to The Sac, to meet with Red Boots An and attend the CMSP meeting. Now, it's not gonna be a particularly fun ride—freeways to Sacramento, yawn—but it's an important ride, so block October 5<sup>th</sup> on your calendar, and stay tuned to [facebook.com/CityBikeMag](https://www.facebook.com/CityBikeMag) for event details.

Our last ride to Sacramento, for the State Parks / OHV Commission open house, to discuss the future of the OHV program, was an overwhelming success—we

managed to get 5 riders to skip outta work early and split the sweaty lanes of I-80 to join a packed house of dirt riders and jeepers standing up for the OHV program.

We're using "resounding success" a little sarcastically here. Big ups to the *fuck yeah five* that soaked their riding suits in sweat for the cause, but seriously—if only five people care enough to take a half day to help us raise a bigger voice in support of moto-rights of all kinds, we're screwed. That's the end of this month's public service announcement / *CityBike* guilt trip.

If you really can't make it, or don't see the value in showing up and making a display of supporting numbers, the good news is that the CHP took our request for outside access to the meeting to heart: you can listen in via CHP conference line at (877) 931-6897, participant pass code 6175923.

## Speaking Of Advisory Boards, The MTC Needs You.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is currently looking to fill four vacant positions on its Policy Advisory Council, the "regular people" committee created by the Commission in 2009 to advise MTC on transportation policies in the Bay Area, representing a diverse set of perspectives including the environment, the economy and social equity.

That last one—social equity—is pretty laughable considering the galaxy-sized gulf between the Tesla-driving *haves* and the bus-riding *have nots* here in the Bay. Citizens advising or not, guess who influences policy the mo\$t?

But there's another group that's tragically underrepresented in this supposedly diverse council: motorbike riders. Is it because motorcyclists are the most unengaged "special interest group" since dead people, or because the MTC just doesn't care? Probably a little of both, with an extra dash of the last one.

Two of the open slots are at-large: one environment representative and one economy or environment representative. The other two must be from Napa County, and represent senior (surely more than a few of our newsprint readers must qualify) or minority interests.

Editor Surj applied, but since he'll certainly be rejected due to some combination of zero qualifications, shitty attitude and general misanthropy, we need more riders to apply in hopes of getting at least one rider into the committee—it's a shameful goddamn travesty that motorcyclists aren't represented in this forum.

Interested? Think you've got what it takes to represent the moto world in the bullshit

## Moto-Safety Update From The Budman

By Dennis "Budman" Kobza

A few years ago, I was sitting in the CMSP Advisory Committee meeting up in Sac and this gent named Surj Gish asked during the public commentary portion, "What's going to happen with the 8 million dollars sitting in the CMSP fund, not being used?" The cost of running the CMSP training program has historically been around \$1.6 million, and every year the fund was growing. A light bulb went off in my head, and I said yeah!

During the final stages of the meeting, where they ask Committee members for comments I asked if I could make a motion. After some whispers back and forth between the Chief and what I assumed was their attorney, the answer was "yes." I guess no one had ever made a motion before.

So I made a motion to figure out the best way to use excess funds to improve motorcycle safety and after a unanimous vote it was agreed the CMSP would. Back then we only met once a year, but due to the motion we now were being asked to attend a second meeting and that was to provide and review suggestions on how

to spend the money. They asked us to submit suggestions via email a few months before the meeting, and I made three, after working hard with BARF member and awesome safety advocate Data Dan to provide some proposals we felt would make a difference.

I was a bit shocked when only five total were turned in—including my three. The big boys failed to turn anything at all, which shocked me even more. My three were accepted for study and so was one other from UC Berkeley. Cool.

One year later, I had not heard of much progress on my ideas, except a few smaller PSAs. Hmmm... frustrating. At the next meeting, I learned that CHP cannot dip into those funds without legislative approval or taking the exact same amount out of the general operational budget. I was flabbergasted and mad. It's *our money*, riders' money—we pay for it out of our moto registrations. I was however very happy to see that the CHP was actually now taking the CMSP committee more seriously—it felt like we were doing something more positive.

Another year later—I just received a request for ideas again and that came with the info that 1 million dollars has been added to the working budget. *Awesome!!!* I'm working on my first suggestion now and hope to share more good news in the near future, but I thought you would like to know that progress is being made, and it all started with a simple question from this *CityBike* dude.

*Budman runs BayAreaRidersForum.com, is a member of the CMSP Advisory Committee, and probably did more for motorcyclists in California before his morning coffee today than most will do this year. Read more about him in our April 2016 issue at [CityBike.com/back](http://CityBike.com/back).*



Photo: Sam Devine

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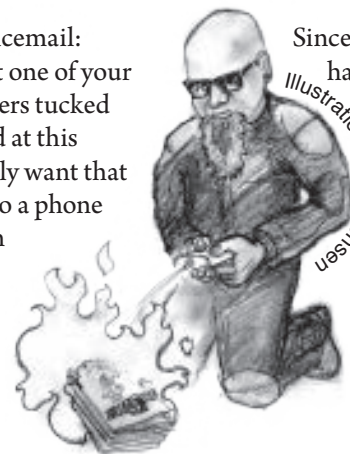


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It started with a voicemail: “Uhm... you’ve got one of your newspaper dispensers tucked into our alcove, and at this point, we don’t really want that here...” which led to a phone discussion between Editor Surj and a neurotic-sounding representative of TechShop, who claimed that the rack was giving “the homeless” a place to “stand around as if they belong there.” Editor Surj proposed we keep delivering to TechShop, but just put a few inside with the other publications. Tech Shop guy rejected this, saying, “We just don’t want it here. I don’t think our customers care about it.” A strange statement, considering that some TechShop employees ride, and members of the Wrecking Crew have worked on stuff in TechShop and seen people working on bikes and bike parts.



way, because that’s what Skully’s customers victims got: jack fucking shit.

Since last month’s *CityBike* brought happiness to motorcycle people around the world, a lot has changed at Skully. Sort of. They’re still not shipping helmets, so that’s uh... normal. They’re also apparently not doing anything else—what they’ve been doing for a while anyway, but now everyone knows it. No one is even updating their website, which still features a slap-in-the-face popup proclaiming “now shipping.”

Skully posted a note on its Indiegogo page on August 5<sup>th</sup> announcing it was ceasing operations, that it would not be shipping helmets (surprise!) or “processing refunds directly” (translation for backers: *you’re fucked*) and that it’d be filing for Chapter 7 bankruptcy. To make things even more *interesting*, in a “where’d my money go?!” kind of way, the Weller Bros’ former assistant and bookkeeper, Isabelle Faithhour filed a suit claiming the Bros demanded she “engage in fraudulent bookkeeping practices designed to defraud investors,” that company funds were used to purchase a Dodge Viper, a replacement Viper when the first was crashed, as well as an Audi R8, motorcycles, and a long list of other seemingly non-businessy stuff. Skully funds were also spent on strippers and an apartment in the Marina—typical, bro.

In any event, you can’t get *CityBike* at Tech Shop SF any more. We’re going to choose to not see this as a sign of *CityBike*’s fading relevance, but instead as more evidence of San Francisco’s descent into *suck*, having been overrun by whiny, entitled brats with no appreciation for things like a moto-mag that comes off on your hands while you read it.

## Skully: Not So Smart Now

Skully’s been something of a convenient whipping boy for us, combining all that can go wrong with crowdfunded “products” and the New Bay Order of tech-douchery into one easily-loathed package. We once asked ourselves, “Are we being too hard on these guys?” We didn’t think so, but the answer is now an oh-so-resoundingly-clear “hell no!”

Last month we shamed ourselves by citing TechCrunch (“Ongoing Skully-duggery” – News, Clues & Rumors, August 2016) on changes to the “management” structure at the company responsible for the “world’s first augmented reality helmet,” except for the part where they never really made helmets, in spite of fifteen million bucks in funding and a shitload of pre-orders. It’s ok to use the word *shitload* here, by the

ignore the bill, in which case it will become law after August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

We’re cautiously optimistic, as always, but we’re getting less cautious and more optimistic. It just seems unlikely that AB 51 won’t become law at this point. So in the spirit of that cautious-but-increasing-optimism, we’re planning an event to celebrate the passing of the bill, with none other than BARF’s Budman. Stay tuned for details, but believe us—we’re unbelievably stoked to be so close to celebrating our win after years of work.

## CityBike Is To Blame For The “Homeless Problem” In SF

...Is how we understand a request from someone at TechShop SF, asking that

bureaucracy world? Get your ass to [mtc.ca.gov/whats-happening/news/mtc-opens-recruitment-four-vacancies-its-policy-advisory-council](http://mtc.ca.gov/whats-happening/news/mtc-opens-recruitment-four-vacancies-its-policy-advisory-council) to apply.

## Legislative Update: AB 51 In The Home Stretch

By the time you read this, AB 51 will likely have become a law. In case you’ve been living under a pile of holed pistons, this is the California lane splitting bill that would, or rather *will*—think positive!—formalize the ability of the CHP to develop “educational guidelines relating to lane splitting in a manner that would ensure the safety of the motorcyclist and the drivers and passengers of the surrounding vehicles” by working with DMV, DOT, OTS, “motorcycle organization focused on motorcyclist safety” and others. We’re pushing hard for the uh... *CityBike* Motorcycle Safety Foun... wait, that’s taken... Moto-Safety Awesomeness Council (M-SAC) that we just made up to fill that last seat, but since *Ride Fast Take Chances* may put a black mark on our otherwise unassailable qualifications, we’re hoping the Budman is included.

Where were we? Oh yeah... since we last talked (“Legislative Update: AB 51 Keeps On Keepin’ On” – News, Clues and Rumors, August 2016) AB 51 has passed the full Senate, achieved concurrence in the House, and been submitted to the Governor for signature. Doc, err, Governor Brown has until Monday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> to sign or veto the bill. He can also turn up his nose at the collective smell of the Lane Splitting State’s road grimed ‘Stiches and

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# PITSTOPS

## Sisters Centennial Ride: An & Gwynne Catch The Last Leg

By An DeYoung and Gwynne Fitzsimmons

"Woman Can, If She Will" - Augusta Van Buren

**An:** 100 years ago, two sisters decided to make a point. Just as the US was entering WWI, the Van Buren Sisters—descendants of our 8th President, Martin Van Buren—wanted to prove women were perfectly capable of serving as military dispatch riders. And prove it they did—in spades, riding 5,500 miles across the country in the span of about 2 months.

Augusta and Adeline were the first women to ride solo cross-country on motorcycles. On that same trip they also became the first women to ride the freshly created dirt road to the summit of Pikes Peak. The SFMC was supposed to meet the sisters, but when they finally made it to San Francisco, it was weeks later than planned and there was no welcome committee.

**Gwynne:** To understand this ride, it's vital to realize that this wasn't just a bunch of women getting fat sponsors (BMW Motorrad and Allstate) to subsidize a cross-country jaunt to prove that they could do it. No, this ride was a tribute to a couple of high society babes from the past. Adeline and Augusta Van Buren, in a *fuck you* to society's rather restrictive view of



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women's value to events of the day donned military grade motorcycle gear and rode out of New York, San Francisco bound. Their story is well worth researching. I felt privileged to be able to join the last leg of the ride from Carson City to San Francisco.

**An:** In spite of those adventurous-looking boxes on my Ducati, I've never been one to venture too far out of my comfort zone without some serious shoving. So when I first heard about The Sisters Centennial Ride to celebrate the Van Buren sisters' cross-country trek from New York to San Francisco, what slightly adventurous genes I do have flickered a bit, and then I talked myself out of it. Couldn't take that much time off work. It costs how much? Instead, Gwynne and I made plans to meet the

ladies in Nevada and escort them into San Francisco in style, with about 100 other riders.

A layoff notice one week before our ride proved I was dispensable at work.

I'd committed to ride to Carson City from The Sac with Tammy and Veronica from our local Women On Wheels Chapter, the Gold Country Riders, both seasoned moto-adventurers with thousands of miles under their belts. We'd meet Gwynne at the hotel. Up until the night before, I was on the fence about even going. My heart wasn't in it anymore. But Friday morning came, I packed my shit, and instead of heading to work, headed up HWY 50.

The route we took got more and more beautiful and I finally got out of my own head. Latrobe to 88, to 89, to 395—200 miles of beautiful landscapes. And gas stops: a GS and a Triumph, each with the tanks of a camel, were no match for the 3.9 gallon tank on my Ducati.

Hours later we pulled in to the hotel. Slowly, more riders arrived and soon the roped-off parking lot was packed with an array of bikes. Check in, quick shower, and we all met up for the riders' meeting in the lobby. I had wondered how the 60 or so riders managed the ride cross-country together. Turns out they were split up into smaller groups based on skill level—a good move by organizer Alisa Clickenger, founder of Women's Motorcycle Tours ([WomensMotorcycleTours.com](http://WomensMotorcycleTours.com)), which



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Gettin' ready for the group shot at the end of the Sisters Centennial Ride.



rode from, and I in turn learned where they met up with the ride as it made its way across the country. These ladies formed a family over the miles and were happy to bring even more sisters in with every mile.

The room emptied pretty quick after

teaches women touring skills in the context of empowering tours.

**Gwynne:** I arrived at the Gold Dust West in Carson City a hot sweaty mess, completely spent, having just spent three hours lane sharing in 100+ degree heat. I wasn't prepared for the jolt of energy I received upon walking through doors into the air conditioned bliss of that lobby. Over 100 women—and a smattering of men—all focused on recreating an amazing event that took place over 100 years ago. After dinner and a ceremony introducing just about everyone in the room to each other, the ladies doing the full ride received medals to wear for the last leg of the ride into San Francisco, and we learned a little something about each of them.

**An:** Normally at events like this, people tend to stick to their own little group of friends. That didn't happen here. I lost track of how many ladies asked me where I



Photos: Bob Stokstad

dinner, probably due to the 6:30AM kickstands up threat.

Saturday morning, our small group hit the road to the lunch meeting spot, which just happened to be A&S Motorcycles, where my husband works. I only had my mesh gear and nearly froze over Donner Pass in the morning, but by the time we got into the valley I was well thawed. We ate quick, knowing with Saturday traffic on I-80, we'd need to be on the road by 11AM if we were to make it to the Golden Gate by 2PM.

**Gwynne:** Anyone familiar with Bay Area traffic will shake their collective heads at the thought of 37 on a Saturday afternoon. Fortunately, Moira Zinn from Power Trip Industries was there to lead most of the 64 riders who had completed the cross-country trip on an alternate route to the Golden Gate Bridge.

**An:** We ended up lane sharing most of the way, making it to the meetup spot at Fort Baker with a little time to spare. The SFMC was already there, ready to meet the spirits of the Van Buren sisters and lead them in to San Francisco. We waited for the other groups to show up, a bit worried about some of the out of state ladies who'd never done any lane sharing before today. They slowly filtered in to the photo op spot below the Golden Gate, and an impromptu dance party broke out while we waiting for the stragglers to roll in.

We eventually got our big group photo in front of the Golden Gate and then the SFMC got everyone in place for the ride across. All 150-plus riders.

I can only imagine the amazing view of us riding across that bridge and through the streets of San Francisco. All I could see in front of me and in my mirrors was motorcycles. Traffic stopped, people were

leaning out of car windows and coming out onto their front porches to wave and cheer us on. It was the best parade ever and I could feel the excitement of these ladies riding their last few miles. When we pulled in to the SFMC clubhouse there were hugs all around.

**Gwynne:** After a bit of cleanup, we descended on the San Francisco D-Store. Party! Looking around at the faces, the magnitude of this event dawned on me. Members of the Van Buren family—all riders—made the trek. The two stars in my eyes were Sarah Van Buren and Sophie Ruderman—the two youngest descendants of August and Adeline. Even Sarah's rider coach joined her for part of the journey and the after-party. At the end of the evening it was clear that lifelong bonds had been made, and that this will not be the final tribute to the amazing Van Buren sisters.

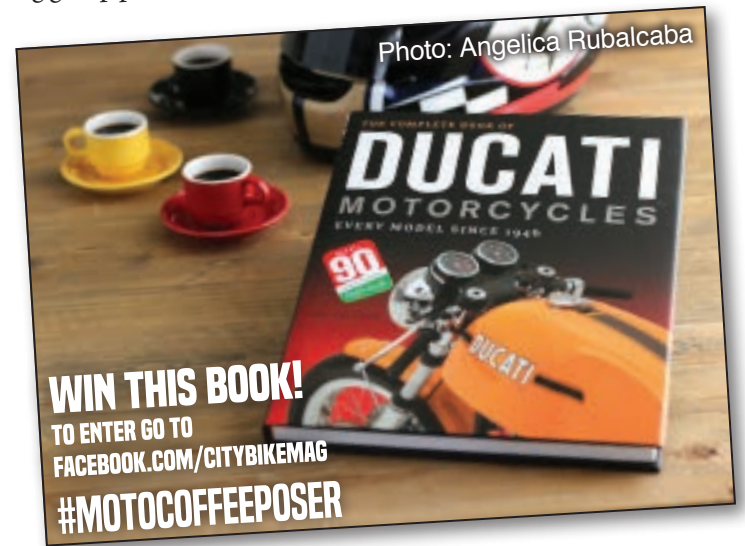


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## New Stuff

### Hardbound, Softcore: *The Complete Book Of Ducati Motorcycles*

By An DeYoung

My first ever write-up for *CityBike* was Ian Falloon's *The Art Of Ducati* ("Hardbound Bike Porn: The Art of Ducati" – New Stuff, October 2014). A beautiful book, so beautiful in fact that I had to clean my house to bring it up to the book's level of tidy style.

Now, almost 2 years later, I need to clean the house again. I should probably organize the garage too, because Falloon is back with the *The Complete Book Of Ducati Motorcycles*, in honor of the brand's 90th anniversary, supposedly containing every model since 1946.

Unlike the *Art Of* book, which focused on some of the signature models, *The Complete* book is just that: complete. From the young Cucciolo's up to the 2016 Multistrada Enduro (you heard me, Enduro) and Scrambler Sixty2.

The introduction shows the same two pictures used in the previous book: that fantastic art deco factory shot, employees proudly amassed out front; along with a shot of the pre-WWII Ducati camera that continues to sit on a shelf well out of my reach. I suppose you can only write so many variations of an introduction to Ducati, but Falloon does tell a different story for *The Complete* book, starting out with the Ducati brothers and their first experiments with radio, their connection to Mussolini and the empire built on

Ducati electronics. The rise and fall, and rise, and fall, and rise.

The rest of the book goes year by year, with copious photos and a Readers Digest spec sheet for the models and their relatives. There's also a paragraph or two on each family. I give extra points for the inclusion of a wheelie shot of my boyfriend Carlos Checa celebrating his 2011 Superbike win. Not sure why there are two shots of Rossi's bike, but whatever.

On that every model since '46 thing, I of course paged through looking for the bikes that currently live in my garage, and unlike *The Art* book, they were all there. Wrong colors, but yeah, they're there. Ok Mr. Falloon, you passed the Red Boots test. Two pistons up, again.

\$50. Hardcover, 256 pages, 10" x 12". Learn more and get your own at [QuartoKnows.com](http://QuartoKnows.com).

### Rock 'n' Roll Meets Easy Listening: Nexx Bad Loser Helmet

By Sam Devine

It evokes *Mad Max* and a hundred other high-octane, grindhouse flicks from the late '70s and early '80s. It also calls to mind the funny car racers and the heyday of motorcycling, back when full



Photo: Surj Gish

face helmets first became viable. The Bad Loser from Portuguese helmet maker Nexx, is the latest in retro lids.

The helmet's flashy paint job is courtesy of the Maria Motorcycles Riding Collective, a group of motorcyclists and surfers crafting custom bikes and snapping pictures. They have 17 custom builds posted on their website, mostly Bonneville. The bold colors look like a hand-painted take on the branding plastered all over racers with two or four wheels.

Honestly, the paint job is a little loud for my personal taste, but it's growing on me. The giant billiard ball "27" on the back is certainly *high-vis*, even if it's not yellow.

Strangely, the flashiness makes me feel like I need to rise to some challenge, like I need to prove I have some right to be dressed like Steve McQueen. So I've been alternately cruising in extreme relaxation mode and pulling hands-free hoonin' like a numbskull to prove that I'm cool enough to be wearing this image-intense headpiece.

And this thing is cool. Definitely. It's the type of lid that makes kids wave and gets pedestrians to turn their heads. Say what you want to about the history of helmets and airstream advances, to the common car driver, the Bad Loser is the very sort of thing that makes them want to trade their cup holder for a couple wheels. "There but for my shitty job go I," they think as talk radio lulls them into the haze of afternoon commuter traffic.

Keeping things old school, the Bad Loser has only one vent. This always-open, vertical slit on the chin guard has a cool,

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## UNEASY RIDER

WITH SURJ GISH

### The Price Of Cool

We've got a couple pretty cool bikes in this issue, and I mean cool like in the movies: black leather jacket, the guy a young lady wouldn't bring home to meet mom, probably been in some trouble, motorbike-riding roustabout cool, not just the usual sidelong, "Oh, that's a cool bike" kinda cool. Dallas Winston, don't give a good goddamn *cool*.

Harley-Davidson's Forty-Eight and Yamaha's Bolt C-Spec are bikes I wouldn't buy myself, at least today, but they're bikes I like quite a bit, for reasons I admittedly don't totally understand. I'm a diehard utility rider and neither of these bikes pass the single bike test—but they sure are sexy sons of bitches. Given more garage space and money, I'd be tempted to buy such a bike—a bike for just kickin' it 'round town, chinstrap-deep in old school cool.

And therein lies the issue—I paid \$100 for my first street bike, and going back further, I'm pretty sure my dad traded broken piston rings and used motor oil for

the sketchy-but-unfucking-fathomably-awesome dirt bikes my brothers and I cut our teeth (and the rest of our resilient young bodies) on. It was a decade-plus after that first single-Benjamin bike before I spent more than \$1,000 on a motorcycle.

Yeah, these are different times, and this is sure as shit a different place. But as a son of a blue collar workin' man, as a grown up with a child inside that vaguely remembers actually playing kick the fucking can, the idea that anyone would pay \$8,000 to \$10,000 or more for a motorcycle that gets ridden single digit miles now and then, basically a showpiece, a status symbol, an *accessory*... well, I tell you what, son. It chaps at my hide.

Some of you that know me, that have ridden with me, are certainly saying, "Will you *listen* to this self-righteous sumbitch? He rides a BMW!" And that's true. But in my defense, I buy a bike and stick with it, kick the shit out of it, ride it like God and The Devil both intended.

You get the difference, right? My BMW MP\$PPI (Miles Per Dollars of Purchase Price Index, a proprietary *CityBike* metric,

©2016) is way better than the average round-towner owner's MP\$PPI, because I ride further in one day than your typical bar-hopper does in a month. Or a year.

Goddamn, I hate that word. *Bar-hopper*. May as well call these bikes *stupid assholes*.

I swear I'm not trying to get into the usual cooler-than-thou routine of "I actually *ride!*" I'm just pointing and laughing nervously at the idea that a motorcycle that you can't readily ride the piss out of, till you run out of "where next?" is worth roughly 1/6<sup>th</sup> the median household income in California. Hell, head to the south and that \$11k roustabout will run you damn near 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the median household income in places like West Virginia, places where you're damn sure gonna want to spend a few extra bucks on a bike with the fuel capacity get you way the fuck out of there.

\$8,000, \$10,000, \$12,000... in the moto-press, we talk about these price points as "entry level," conveniently forgetting what that amount of money means to

most people in America. People trying to get their kids on bikes, raising the next generation of riders. Sure, the industry is *built* on extracting money from people that don't actually ride, or ride much, but to maintain the critical mass required to thrive, the way it is again now... well, I tell you what, son. You need more bikes that don't put up such a high barrier to entry, whether that barrier is a high price or a high seat.

This isn't an indictment of particular bikes—not the round-towners in this issue, or the double-down ADV bikes coming in the next. It's not an indictment at all, really—just musings on priorities, wondering out loud: "Does this makes sense? Is this gonna work?" ☺



Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba

The 3rd (somewhat) Annual

# East Bay Motorcycle Review

Motorcycle Show, Contest, Party, Fights, Benefit

Presented by the East Bay Rats Motorcycle Club (Est. 1994)

## Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup>

1<sup>PM</sup> to 9<sup>PM</sup> @ 3025 San Pablo Ave, Oakland



### ■ 5 Category Motorcycle Contest (audience vote - free to enter)

- Best Rat/Streetfighter Bike
- Best Chopper (pre-1980)
- Most Original
- People's Choice
- Best Modern Bike (post 1980)

- Prizes
- Fights
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- Raffles
- Entertainment

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a noticeable drop in audio intensity. It's like rolling a window up on a car. I found myself riding around with my other helmets, raising and lowering the visor to test the difference in street and wind noise. None of the others even came close to the drop in sonic intrusions that the Bad Loser offers.

The straps on the visor do cut into the peripherals a little bit, which may be my least favorite thing. The other thing is having to unclip the visor to sling it over an elbow—a little annoying. But hey, if my biggest complaints are having to turn my head a little further and snapping a button now and then, well, it really ain't too bad a product, even if it is a Bad Loser.

The snap-on peak turns out to be surprisingly effective at blocking sunlight as I motor west after a long day. It blocks as much light as the peak on my Bell MX-9, but it doesn't pull my head around when I check blind spots. Between the peak, the tinted shield, the low noise level, and the comfortable liner, this helmet is like a mood-lit living room for your head.

As I split down Haight Street on my beat up, quirky cruiser, I get a little flash of being that guy on the bike from the cover of *Shakedown Street*. Cruising through the cool kids—this helmet has cool down. It's comfortable, quiet, light and flashy. If you've got a cruiser or a snappy sense of style, it's a

to the recent rebirth under Polaris, *Indian Motorcycle* goes into great detail.

Personal highlights for me are the details of Indian building bikes that were continually faster and better than the competition despite management that spent every dollar it could on anything but motorcycle R&D. The tale of the 1927 Scout is a great example. It was a stopgap overbore of the previous year's bike, done to keep the bike relevant when the AMA changed rules to allow 45 CI engines—



Indian's bikes were being outsold by HD 2 to 1, while Indian wasted the little cash it had available to design and develop a refrigerator that was never produced.

Instead of retooling to build new heads, Indian just punched out the Scout from 37ci to 45. It was believed at the time that there needed to be a heat soak

between the valves and the edge of the bore in the combustion chamber. Indian went against this thinking for the sake of saving money, reliability be damned. The happy accident in all this is that the overbore essentially moved the valve inlet directly against the edge of the cylinder bore, which helped the engine run cooler and breathe easier.

See? Happy accidents do happen.

Around the same time, Indian decided to do away with model years in order to "release new technology whenever it was ready instead of waiting for a new model year," which sounds surprisingly tech bro bullshit for almost a century back. This effectively let Indian's management stop worrying about upgrading the bikes each year, and instead spend more time pursuing other non-motorcycle related ventures. This policy proved to be a disaster, like every other "innovation" of the time—the company was basically a cash cow for every investor following the retirement of George Hendee.

There's no doubt that Polaris's recent acquisition of the Indian name has reignited interest in the once-great, then-orphaned brand. This book does devote

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shiny metal mesh keeping carapaces clear of the contents of this killer lid. While the lack of venting gets things a little sweltering on longer, hotter days, it's fantastic for lane splitting around the fog-filled streets of San Francisco. And the shield can be pushed up against the peak to let a nice crack of air-flow in.

While its style comes from motorcycling's past, once inside the helmet, modern comforts make it clear that this isn't yesterday's helmet. The liner is as plush as they come, consisting of X.mart Dry fabric and supple faux leather. The shell is composed of fiberglass, aramid and carbon, making this brain bucket as light as cheap American beer. It weighs in at an impressive 3.3 pounds, even with the peak and face shield.

While riding home in it, I decide to work out a kink in my neck. Usually I can just cock my heavy-lid-laden noggin to one side and get a few pops out of the ole-head-holder. But this time I notice that the weight of the Nexx is almost imperceptible and is little help in popping the nitrogen from the joints of my neck. "Damn," I think. "This thing is light."

The lack of vents has another pleasant side-effect: it is extremely quiet. When the elastic banded face shield presses the rubber seals against each other, there's



The Bad Loser encourages bad behavior.

Photo: Surj Gish

futuristic take on a retro helmet—making it very *now*.

\$399. Learn more and find out where to get your own at [NexxNorthAmerica.com](http://NexxNorthAmerica.com).

### Refrigerators Or Motorcycles?

By Fish

Here at *CityBike*, we love a proper coffee table book. Particularly ones with lots of pictures. *Especially* ones with pictures of motorcycles. This one here is much more than pretty pictures, though.

*Indian Motorcycle – America's First Motorcycle Company* is the story of Indian, as you might have guessed. The author, Darwin Holmstrom, has done a comprehensive job of filling in many details of the company's journey. It's a good read, equal parts entertaining and educational. From the founding of the company by George Hendee through the first closure, to the "Gilroy Indians" and on

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a third of its content to that resurrection and the subsequent technology that Polaris infused into the brand. The engineering aspects explained will satisfy the geek in all of us—at least those of us that get excited by piston rings.

A pleasant addition is the included briefing on Polaris and Victory's history—while we don't get a complete history of the snow machine, the included bits give a nice picture of the company's roots.

*Indian Motorcycle – America's First Motorcycle Company* presents very nicely with an elegant hardcover and gorgeous photographs on high quality paper. Make sure to get one for all your Harley-loving friends.

\$50. Hardcover, 224 pages, 9.75" x 12". Learn more and get a copy for your coffee table at [QuartoKnows.com](http://QuartoKnows.com).

## Judge, Jury, Lane Splitter

By Surj Gish

I dug 1994's *The Punisher*—it was dark and brutal, before mainstream hero movies started making us examine characters like *The Comedian* and

but who am I kidding? No one hand-paints helmets any more, of course, and this is a helmet that's \$174.99.

That's right—\$174.99. Maybe I'm spoiled, but I can't remember the last time I paid under \$200 for a good street helmet. Actually, I can remember it, but it was a long time ago—my daily rider NeoTec cost me nearly three times what The Punisher charges for his services.

It's not some cheap-ass junk, either. While not quite as plush as some \$1,500 French hipster helmet (Are those plush? We haven't actually



LEAKED SHOT FROM THE  
UPCOMING *THE PUNISHER*:  
*SHITTYBIKE* REBOOT



Photos: Angelica Rubalcaba

Rorschach; John Travolta was wacky and Thomas Jane rode a Triumph. Briefly. The next one, with that other guy, and then the TV version of Punisher, played by that weird guy from *The Walking Dead*? Whatever. I hear a "reboot" might be in the works, too. Also whatever.

The aesthetic of that first movie, though, is captured on HJC's new Marvel-licensed CL-17 The Punisher model—dark, brutal, tough-looking. It's a subdued lid—matte black with silver-gray The Punisher skull graphics on each side, with a white Punisher skull on top. Compared to the overwrought color schemes of so many helmets on the market, the Punisher skulls are downright *elegant*—the ones on the side are almost invisible in less-than-bright light. Branding is minimal, too—a red Marvel badge on the left side, a little HJC logon the right, and a bigger HJC sticker over the eyeport.

I was thinking to myself, "Man, this lid would look a look more Punish-y without that big HJC on the forehead" and noticed that the HJC website shows the helmet without it. Turns out it comes right off, leaving no snotty residue behind—a thoughtful touch, especially if you're looking for max badness.

If you get real close, you can see the edges of the graphics—like the stickers on the Bolt C-Spec (page 18, yo!) they're not as off the charts cool as hand painted stuff,

checked 'em out.) the CL-17, Punisher or no, is a comfortable, thoughtfully designed helmet. I wear a Large in intermediate oval-shaped helmets like Shoei's Neotec and Arai's VX-Pro4, and The Punisher fits me well, with only the slightest hot spot on my forehead after a couple hours—which will perhaps go away as the liner breaks in completely.

There are plenty of vents—below and above the shield, and up top, plus exhaust vents on the sides and back. It flows air pretty well, and doesn't seem exceptionally loud, although honestly I'm probably not the guy to judge this—I wear earplugs and my hearing's well down the road towards the town of "What's that you say?" Suffice to say that my overall experience with the helmet has been good.

The clear shield that comes with The Punisher is good—easy on, easy off, good clarity. HJC also sent a dark shield, which makes the helmet look meaner than Lindsay Lohan on a bad day. Also like Lindsay, it had some issues. The upper edge has a bend that creates some optical oddities, which is weird—the clear shield doesn't have that bend or the resulting refraction. But man, that dark shield looks killer, and if you're wearing a blacked-out helmet with Punisher graphics, you want to look killer, right?

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Learn more and find out where to buy at [HJCHelmets.com](http://HJCHelmets.com).

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## EVENTS

### September 2016

**August 20, 2016: Inaugural Tom Perkins Legacy Foundation Ride, Dinner & Auction** (Dudley Perkins H-D, 333 Corey Way, South San Francisco, CA 94080)

In honor and remembrance of Tom "TP" Perkins, the Tom Perkins Legacy Foundation sets forth to assist individuals who have been affected by the loss of a limb, helping continue a standard and quality of life similar to that before their injury. Event starts at DP H-D at 4 PM, and ends up at Don Ramon's Mexican Restaurant for dinner and auction. [TomPerkinsLegacy.org](http://TomPerkinsLegacy.org)

**August 20, 2016: A&S Motorcycles Hot August Bikes** (A&S Motorcycles, 1125 Orlando Ave, Roseville, CA 95661)

Vintage, Rat, Cafe Racer and Custom Motorcycle Show! 10 AM to 1 PM, free admission, free to show your bike. [ASPowerSports.com](http://ASPowerSports.com)

**August 20, 2016: 4th Annual FXRs of California Event** (Sacramento Raceway Park, 5305 Excelsior Road, Sacramento, CA 95827)

FXR and Dyna only bike show, grudge racing, wheelie contests, Jason Pullen stunting, and of course food, music and vendors. \$20, 1-10 PM. [Eventbrite.com/e/4th-](http://Eventbrite.com/e/4th-)

[annual-fxrs-of-california-event-tickets-25220866290](http://annual-fxrs-of-california-event-tickets-25220866290)

**August 25-28, 2016: BMW Riders Association BMW 100th Anniversary Celebration** (Monterey, CA)

Celebrate 100 years of BMW in Monterey at Laguna Seca Raceway with camping, custom bikes, food trucks, an off-road skills course, cars (yawn...), racing and amazing rides just around the corner. [BMWridersAssociation.leadpages.co/bmw100th/](http://BMWridersAssociation.leadpages.co/bmw100th/)

**August 28, 2016: Moto Guild SF Swap Meet** (849 13th St (on Treasure Island), San Francisco, CA 94130)

Bikes, gear, parts and barbeque! If you've got a lot, sign up in advance for \$10. If you just have a few things, just show up and add a price tag. [MotoGuild-SF.com](http://MotoGuild-SF.com)

**September 3, 2016: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sorta-annual East Bay Motorcycle Review** (East Bay Rats Clubhouse, 3025 San Pablo Ave, Oakland, CA 94608)

The East Bay Rats revive the East Bay Motorcycle Review for its third year, with a bike contest, bands and raffles. The event benefits the inner city youth of East Oakland Boxing Gym and Kings Boxing Gym equipment. 1 - 9 PM. [facebook.com/EastBayRatsMC](http://facebook.com/EastBayRatsMC).

**September 10, 2016: Moto Envy Show** (Black Lightning Motorcycle Cafe, 440 F Street, Eureka, CA 95501)

### Lodi Cycle Bowl 2016 Schedule

Flat track racing at the home of the blue groove, where the Lodi Motorcycle Club has been running races continuously since 1953. [LodiCycleBowl.com](http://LodiCycleBowl.com).

August 20: ST

August 27: ST

September 10: Toby Jorgensen Memorial TT

September 17: ST

October 1: ST

October 15: TT

October 16: ST

Cool bikes at a cool destination—the Black Lightning in Eureka—with lots of great riding on the way. Check out our coverage ("From Eureka, With Envy" – Pit Stops, October 2015) of last year's show on our back issues page at [CityBike.com/back-issues.html](http://CityBike.com/back-issues.html).

Awards will be given for *most envied* in the categories of Cafe, Vintage, Sport/Racer, Vintage Racer, Custom, Rat, Daily Rider, Overall Most Envied, People's Choice and the George Wyman's Long Distance Award. [BlackLightningMotorcycleCafe.com/moto-envy-show.html](http://BlackLightningMotorcycleCafe.com/moto-envy-show.html)

**September 10-11, 2016: Lafayette Police Motorcycle Competition**

(3620 Happy Valley Rd. Lafayette, CA 94549)

Local everyday heroes compete on their police motorcycle for the ultimate reward: bragging rights! Apparently, there's some training involved as well. Like the International Police Motorcycle Competition & Expedition in SF the month before, expect to see amazing feats of skill on performed on porky police bikes, and to go home feeling like a woefully inadequate beginner. [LafayettePoliceMotorcycleCompetition.com](http://LafayettePoliceMotorcycleCompetition.com)

**September 23-25, 2016: Santa Rosa Mile** (Santa Rosa Fairgrounds, 1350 Bennett Valley Rd, Santa Rosa, CA 95404)

You've read our fanboy (and girl) yakkin' about this in News, Clues and Rumors the last couple issues—we're excited about the Santa Rosa Mile. Co-promoters Steve Delorenzi of SDI Insulation and Nancy and Terry Otton of Ramspur Winery really leveled-up the flat track experience with the Calistoga Half-Mile, and we can't wait to see what they're cooking up for this three-day event, the finale of the 2016 AMA Pro Flat Track seasons. [SantaRosaMile.com](http://SantaRosaMile.com)

**October 2, 2016: Monterey Peninsula Vintage Motorcycle Show** (Monterey Moose Family

### AFM 2016 Season Schedule



Get more details at [afmracing.org/schedule](http://afmracing.org/schedule).

Round 5: September 3-4  
Sonoma

Round 6: October 1-2  
Thunderhill

Round 7: October 22-23  
Buttonwillow

### NorCal Short Track Tentative 2016 Schedule

Nor-Cal Short Track's mission is to encourage participation in flat track racing and nurture youth involvement, and to keep the racing fun, family-friendly, competitive, accessible and affordable. [NorCalShortTrack.com](http://NorCalShortTrack.com)

Round 7: September 18

Center, 555 Canyon Del Rey Blvd, Del Rey Oaks, CA 93940)

The Old Capital Lions Club presents a potential replacement for Bikes On The Bay, benefiting the Blind and Visually Impaired Center of Monterey County. 9 AM to 3 PM, \$15-20 entrant registration, free for spectators. [OCLions.club](http://OCLions.club)

**October 8-9, 2016: Lost Coast Dual Sport Adventure** (Ukiah, CA)

A fun, scenic ride everyone can enjoy, hosted by the North Bay MC. Start and finish in Ukiah, overnight in Fortuna. This is a non-competitive event, approximately 200/day. Bikes must be street legal, meet current 96db sound requirements and be capable of 100 miles between fuel stops. \$95 per rider, 250 rider limit. [NorthBayMC.org](http://NorthBayMC.org)

**October 14-16, 2016: Big Bike Weekend** (Win-River Resort & Casino, 2100 Redding Rancheria Rd, Redding, CA 96001)

Three-day event for all riders, with a poker run, bike show, dinner and dance, plus activities for bicycling enthusiasts in partnership Shasta Living Streets. Benefits One SAFE Place ([OSPShasta.org](http://OSPShasta.org)), an organization providing legal services, safety, and emotional support to intimate partners, children, and seniors affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. [BigBikeWeekend.com](http://BigBikeWeekend.com).

My friends and fellow Americans I know what is best for you and yours. Everything I do is for your betterment and you will love it.. understood?

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the moto and the people that enjoy it. Join us in that and become part of our community and support the AMA at the same time. 1 loud voice!

**The Rydther Rally to Hawthorne Nevada is September 16 - 18th. Get to Group Rides now and sign up and secure your room. One hell of a ride and then one hell of a party!**



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# Bolt, Not Upright 2016 Yamaha Bolt C-Spec

By Max Klein  
Photos by Angelica Rubalcaba

I was on the phone with a buddy right before I picked up our 2016 C-Spec.

“So, is it a Yamaha, a Star, or is Bolt another sub-brand?” he asked, dead serious. “It’s kinda still a cruiser, right?”

“Dunno,” I replied similarly pensive. “Maybe it’s a Yamaha Star Bolt C-Spec? I should probably figure that out, huh?”

And figure it out I did, thank you very much.

It turns out that Yamaha’s identity crisis was not just external. When I rode the C-Spec, Yamaha was mid-shift, moving Star back under the tuning forks, and at the same time adding a number of their bikes into a new “Sport Heritage” category. This put the Bolt C-Spec in the same ranks as their prestigious V-Max and the recently reviewed XSR-900 (“Excessier! Yamaha’s New XSR900” – July 2016).

I was still kinda confused—the C-Spec looks nothing like either, and its motor is down on cylinders compared to the aforementioned bikes. The powerplant of the C-Spec is a 58 cubic inch—942 CCs for those who continue to believe the metric system will catch on—60 degree, SOHC

air-cooled v-twin. It’s mated to a 5-speed gearbox and delivers power to the rear wheel via belt drive, like any self-respecting cruiser does.

That motor is stronger than I expected it to be. Power delivery was best in the low and mid range, tapering off as the revs increase, just as one would expect of a biggish twin. Thanks to the TCI (Transistor Controlled Ignition) doing some very quick and efficient math, I could both bog through or power out of corners, depending upon how lazy I was being with the shifter.

While the motor and final drive scream cruiser, the rest of the C-Spec confidently tells everyone that it is (at least dressed like) a cafe racer. The bars are low, but not too low, making you lean forward, but not too forward. Unless you ask Editor Surj.

Yamaha moved the pegs back almost six inches and up an inch and a quarter from the original Bolt’s cruiser-y location, for more clearance at enhanced lean angles. Sure, you’re gonna drag ‘em if you’re tearing up a familiar set of twisties, but even after many drags through many corners I was still fairly comfortable. The peg placement complements the clip-ons’

position quite well, creating an aggressive yet ergonomic experience... in motion.

But stopping? Nope.

There is no comfortable foot placement once you’re no longer moving. In front of the pegs? Not an option, unless you’re

unexpected full stop required a full fist and firm use of my right foot. It isn’t that they don’t work, but rather that they don’t match the performance that the racey café looks allude to. I’d really like to see dual discs up front, and steel braided lines, since I’m asking for stuff.

Even though it’s a bit on the heavy side, the C-Spec is a fairly manageable bike and I understand why the Bolt platform has been a top seller for Yamaha. At an MSRP of \$8,690 it isn’t incredibly expensive, but you can fix that by opening up the accessories catalog and customizing with your favorite bits—well over 50 to choose from. The low seat height (30”) is manageable for inseam-challenged riders and is downright confidence inspiring for those of us that have flamingo legs.

But the question still remains—what is this thing? A big V-Twin with a bunch of low end torque...cruiser, right? Small tank encouraging lots of stops? Catalog full of chrome and billet bits? Definitely is a cruiser. What else could it be?

It doesn’t come overflowing with chrome trinkets out of the box. That minimalist styling must mean it is a bobber? Yeah, it is totally a bobber. But then what is the regular Bolt and Bolt R-Spec? Yamaha wouldn’t make three bobbers, would they? Crap. I’m gonna be in trouble if I don’t figure this out.

But the foot controls aren’t in your usual standard cruiser / bobber position. The bars are and pegs put you in a pretty aggressive stance, and it has the ability to float the front end under power (and over bumps). Crap. cafe racer then?

But it tips the scales at 542 pounds. Cafe racers are supposed to be able to *do* the ton, not *weigh* a ton.

OK, so the C-Spec is having a bit of a time finding itself. What do you call a bike that has the weight of a bobber, the customizability of a cruiser, and the ergonomics of a cafe racer? Let’s just embrace that “Sport Heritage” thing that Yamaha so helpfully suggested, and concern ourselves with riding the damn thing. Who needs classifications when you’re having fun?



forward—you gotta stop sometime, even with 3.2 gallon, peanut-grande tank.

But in motion... man. Let’s focus on that.

This is a good bike. The first time I rode it, I jumped at the chance to take the long way back from our photoshoot via Redwood Road, and was tempted to run a more than a few laps. The Michelins mounted to the 19” front and 16” rear mags gripped and transitioned well, allowing me to swing through corners with minimal effort. The 41 mm forks offer just shy of 5 inches of travel, with the twin piggyback reservoir shocks giving 2.8 inches in the rear. Overall, the suspension is responsive, although a touch on the spongy side—almost like it was designed for the East Bay “roads.” Thanks to a tree root pushing up some pavement near CityBike World HQ, I found it could handle brief instances of uh...let’s call it *weightlessness*.

Two 298mm discs (one on each wheel) bring all the fun and excitement to a halt... eventually. Scrubbing speed in the twisties was a two fingered affair, but an



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And fun it is—straight out of the crate, the C-Spec is pretty damn good. Except for those pegs—but I have a solution for that... don't stop.

*Max rides, races, and often drives the CityBike diesel back and forth to LA to get these damn bikes. We've never seen him so eager as when we gave him the keys to the C-Spec and he asked, "Can I take the long way back to HQ?" What does that mean? Who knows? We report, you decide.*

## PHAT Cafe

By Surj Gish

My first impression of our press bikes (called that because we actually print this thing on a press, see?) is often made as the bikes roll out of our long-suffering F250 diesel, just returned from LA with a bleary-eyed Max at the wheel—if we're not unloading in the dark that is, in which case I just curse the stupid, supposedly-motion-activated light that's supposed to illuminate the loading zone at CityBike World HQ.

Fortunately, Max gear-jammed his way north with the See See-Spec and arrived before dusk, so I actually got to check out its goods before rolling it out of Big F-er and into the recesses of the cavernous World HQ garage complex. I was struck by two thoughts, which are perhaps interestingly, most frequently directed at Harley-Davidsons:

1. Damn, this thing is nice-looking!
2. Hmm... kinda porky.

I generally don't dig on these Seventies-esque color schemes. What'd the '70s give us, after all, other than shitty American cars and disco? Well, ok...punk rock. *Deliverance*. Editor Surj? Maybe not so bad after all.

Anyway, the C-Spec's root beer paint is gorgeous and the overall aesthetics are subtly, elegantly beautiful in a way that the Japanese manufacturers have often struggled to pull off. You know who does that shit right? Harley-Davidson, which is why the "damn, that's a nice-looking bike" comment is most often uttered about Harleys 'round HQ—whether their goddamn footpegs are in a reasonable spot or not.

Just look at it. The shape of the tank, the flow of the stripes from tank to cowl, the simple, iconic flourishes of the "Bolt" on the tank and the "58" (cubic inches, seriously?) on the cowl, which by the way, is shaped just as *right* as the tank. Even the headlight and taillight are stylistically a step up.

Now look at an XSR900. You get me.

Sure, some of those graphics are stickers instead of hand-laid pinstriping, and that exhaust is a little too far into Vulcan S territory for our liking, but it's a fine, foxy beast overall, and if I didn't know it was a production bike, I'd say something like "Man, someone did a nice job on this Bolt-based café bike," right after I said it looked nice and bitched about its weight.

About that weight... it does feel a little *husky*, but it's really more of a visual-to-physical mismatch. 542 pounds wet ain't that big of a deal—it's not like you're gonna be racing this thing, except to the café, of course. It's just that it looks like it oughtta be lighter, and it's disappointing the first time you lean it off the sidestand and grunt a bit.

But once underway, the weight... well, it doesn't exactly disappear, but the bike transforms into something akin to a muscle car—it feels bulky, substantial, *thick*... but in a good way. Almost like some of that American iron.

Speaking of thick, that's the perfect word for the power delivery of that 58-incher. Or



maybe fat, or even *phat*, which I understand the kids used to use to describe a someone that was both thick and sexy, like in the Nineties or thereabouts. Then-about's? Not sure what they're saying now, in any event.

Point being, it's faster than expected, but in a nice rubbery, *round* way, like the front tire on the Forty-Eight you can read about on page 18 of this here issue, but way bigger, and certainly less sketchy at high speeds. This engine is like a big strong dude, back when that guy would have been called a strongman instead of a bodybuilder, when such a gentleman would have had a fine waxed moustache and a thick physique, instead of the self-absorbed definition of the modern day CrossFit douche. It's Paul Bunyan, not some slender software "engineer" in selvedge denim and a \$300 plaid shirt.

Like Max, I was troubled by the pegs, and unlike Max, I found the ergos to be a little too aggro for general purpose riding. But I dug it, partly because every time I got off it, I'd say "Man, that's a nice-looking bike," and nod a bit as I walked away.

Ultimately though, it's the artist formerly known as Star's chunky V-twin and its likeably burly power delivery that has me saying, "Man, that's a nice looking bike, but I can't wait for the SCR950." 🙄

# Calistoga To Santa Rosa, Sliding Sideways

Sammy Halbert out in front of Matt Weidman at the last Santa Rosa Mile in 2012.

By Surj Gish  
Photos by Jeff Ebner, Angelica Rubalcaba, and Randy Kremlacek

It's no secret that we're big fans of flat track here at *CityBike*. We make an annual pilgrimage to the long-running Sacramento Mile, in spite of the unholy heat that curses the The Sac in the summer, and were extremely stoked about the return of the Calistoga Half-Mile in 2014, which brought AMA flat track racing—missing since 2011—back to the sleepy little town of Calistoga as a more holistic *entertainment experience*, with the added bonus of not being hot as hell.

Here's the thing about flat track, and don't be fooled by the mainstream moto-mag guys picking up this concept recently—we've been saying this for a long time: flat track is one of the last bastions of *regular people* racing. Say what you will about the NASCAR-esque left turns-only nature of flat track racing (actually, don't—shut your stupid face) but there's no denying the balls required—figuratively, not literally speaking, as there are women flat trackers too—to fling a bike sideways *intentionally* at 130 MPH or so, over and over. And flat track bikes have an appealing purity, even if those damn *bikesters* are doing their best to ruin it with a constant stream of half-ass street tracker "builds."

We'd looked forward to the 2015 'Stogie, which was looking to be an even more exciting, *big deal* event than the 2014 Half-Mile, at least in part because Triumph Motorcycles had signed on as presenting sponsor, marking the first time a manufacturer had sponsored a specific race in modern-day flat track. The Calistoga was unfortunately postponed, then canceled because the Napa County Fairgrounds were being used as an evacuation center for those displaced by raging wildfires. Serious bummers all around.

After last year's cancellation, the hopeful return of the Calistoga had become a frequent topic of discussion around the damp basement that serves as *CityBike* world HQ. When we heard that the Calistoga would be replaced by the Santa Rosa Mile, as the season closer no less, our expectations were high. We knew that the

team behind the Calistoga, Nancy and Terry Otton of Ramspur Winery and Steve Delorenzi of SDI Insulation, had planned big things for the 2015 Calistoga and assumed that their *think big* style would

transfer to the Santa Rosa Mile. Then we heard that Triumph was in as presenting sponsor, and our expectations soared to new heights—off to the races, as they say.

I wanted to find out what makes the Terry 'n' Steve promo team tick, to understand how and why they're promoting flat track at such an elevated level in a world where walking the

line between half-ass and just plain crazy is all too common, so I headed to Ramspur Winery with master lensman Jeff Ebner in late July, to talk with Santa Rosa Mile co-promoter Terry Otton. We were joined by Randy Kremlacek of the California Flat Track Association, and a passel of magnificent motorcycles from Terry's garage. A few days later I had a phone conversation with the other half of the co-promoter pair, Steve Delorenzi.

In keeping with *CityBike's* extraordinarily high standards of journalistic integrity, we're compelled to tell you that the Santa Rosa Mile is a *CityBike* advertiser, and we are a sponsor (albeit a very small one) of the event. Maybe *compelled* is the wrong word—we heard somewhere that we're s'posed to divulge such things, and figure we oughta do it, just in case anyone is still taking us seriously.

So why flat track? The answer is pretty simple—Terry raced semi-pro back in the late '60s and early '70s, and Steve raced as well: "You know, pro/am. I never really went pro—I was on my own at a very young age, so I had to work... I got a job in

the shipyards, and I was able to race around that for twelve-plus years."

Steve had also been involved on the promotional side of the business, working with Circle Bell Enterprises starting in the early '70s, and now runs SDI Racing, sponsoring four-time Grand National Champion and X Games gold medalist Jared Mees. Terry's involvement in flat track was reignited after he retired in 2011—he has since sponsored individual racers including former GNC champ Jake Johnson, Henry Wiles, Jake Shoemaker and a plethora of others. Like Steve and Randy, the foundation of Terry's involvement is *the good of the sport*—he and his wife Nancy have donated to the AMA Pro Flat-Track Rookie's Class of '79, which raises money for injured racers, and to Vet Motorsports, which seeks to empower injured combat veterans through participation in motorsports, on both two and four wheels.

That thing I mentioned about the incorrect assumption about the venue switch from

our awards banquet.' And I went, well that's interesting to me... and then I started thinking about making it more than a one day event, and Randy and I started to talk about having his organization do Friday and Saturday. But when I started to think about that, I said you know, I'm not just going to have anybody do Friday and Saturday, I wanted somebody that was an AMA sanctioned... that actually had a series. And so, Randy joined us."

"I didn't really think Santa Rosa was gonna go for it," he continues. "So I went over there, expecting to be kicked out of their office, and they were *ecstatic*. The new CEO of the fairgrounds came from Del Mar and she had been around ten years ago when Chris Agajanian was doing races there. She was all excited and I just went *wow*. It was something that was meant to be."

"Well, the fairgrounds need and want everything they can get. And all the sudden they became a lot more friendly," adds Randy, referring to the elimination of state subsidies for county fairs in recent years.

Terry agrees. "And that's in contrast to dealing with the fairgrounds in Calistoga... But the fairgrounds, they don't want cars there, they don't want motorcycles there, they don't want anything there. And they made it very difficult... when we were trying to reschedule

our event they wouldn't give me a date, wouldn't give me this, wouldn't give me that... zero cooperation."

Randy adds, "They don't need racing."

Later, Steve confirms Santa Rosa's enthusiasm. "I made the call to Katie over there, and they said 'we want to roll out the red carpet.' I was away racing, and Terry was able to go in and negotiate the



Photo: Randy Kremlacek



Terry Otton and Randy Kremlacek.

Photo: Jeff Ebner



Terry has a few cool bikes.

Photo: Jeff Ebner

Calistoga to Santa Rosa? Terry tells me how that transpired:

"This year, when we were talking about Calistoga again, Michael Lock (*CEO of AMA Pro Racing*) gave me a call... 'Terry,' he says, 'I'd like to ask you to consider something.' And I said well, what's that? He says, 'Would you consider moving the venue to Santa Rosa, and doing the mile?' And I went... that's a much greater risk. That's a big deal... cost. He said, 'Well, we'd make it the final of the year and we'd have

weekend for the Ramspur Winery Santa Rosa Mile. And excitingly enough... one of the very first OEMs to sponsor a race was Triumph. As they were in Calistoga. Triumph stepped up, excitingly, to basically be one of the first OEMs to sponsor a grand national race in years... even though Harley sponsors the series, Triumph, they're coming in and actually sponsoring the race. So it's presented by Triumph."

Triumph's involvement in flat track in recent years has been important; a firm nudge in the direction of Harley-Davidson, long the de facto flat track "brand." Of course, Kawasaki is a player in recent years—perhaps you've heard how Bryan Smith has owned the Sac Mile six times in a row now, on his Crosley-sponsored Kawi. Ducati wants us to think about their Scrambler as a flat tracker, and Yamaha's getting into the game with their FZ-07 platform, too. But none of those companies are putting up money like Triumph is, and it makes sense—flat track is true fuckin' grit, and that's the brand Triumph is trying to build. Flat track, land speed records, Steve McQueen and all that—real deal riding, not posing.

But they're not alone. After kickstarting the Hooligan flat track thing with the help of moto-lifestyle marketing mercenary Roland Sands, Indian is joining the fray, too. Their race-only 750cc flat track engine was approved by AMA Pro Racing earlier this year—the first time that's happened since Honda's RS750 back in the eighties, a time in the distant past, well before most of these *authentic* Hooligans twisted a grip.

Terry with a never-awarded trophy bottle from the canceled 2015 Calistoga.



Photo: Jeff Ebner

Jared Mees has been testing Indian's bike, and is expected to race aboard an Indian next year—factory and satellite teams are in the works for 2017. In the almost-here and now, word that a well-known (think former Grand National Champ) will be racing an Indian at Santa Rosa this

year. Wanna find out who? Get your ass to the race!

This fans-first approach represents Steve, Terry and Randy's ideas of where flat track should be going in the coming years. Their shared backgrounds in different segments of the business world has imbued them with a commitment to understanding *who* those fans are, to better serve them—something some promoters often miss pretty badly on. Who's the customer? Is it the rider, the team owner, their sponsors? The people in the stands?

Terry explains: "Whether I was right or wrong, when we did Calistoga we wanted to have strategic sponsors because I thought that would help the sport. I wanted to do something that created a more fun event. I wanted it to be fan-centric. We had the giveaway (The Calistoga Half-Mile partnered with local Yamaha dealers to give away a TTR125, which turned into two TTR50s for tiny winner Amanda and her twin brother Gabriel, as we reported in "A Win-Win at the Calistoga Half-Mile" – News, Clues & Rumors, November 2014),

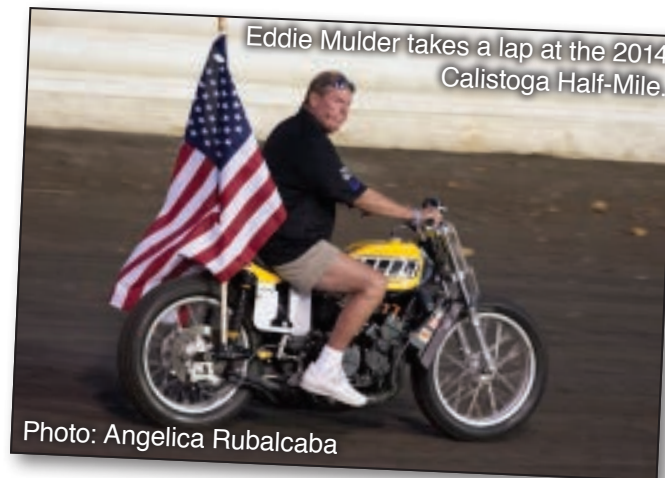


Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba

we had Eddie Mulder as the Master of Ceremonies, we had a band... we tried to do things to create a venue that people wanted to come to. Where I got that from is how I ran my business."

Steve is excited about Triumph's (and Indian's) involvement, and hopes to have both Calistoga and Santa Rosa next year. "I want to see it expand. Now that we have the infrastructure dialed in, let's bring in the big boys."

In the meantime, the team has a lot planned to make sure the 2016 return of the Santa Rosa Mile is triumphant. While it looks like there won't be a rider parade like Calistoga circa 2014, The Mile has turned into a three day racing event from September 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, with emphasis on major stoke for the fans.

The weekend kicks off early at North Bay Triumph dealer, Marin Speed Shop, with a barbecue / meet-and-greet type thing on Thursday afternoon. The racing starts with amateur flat track racing

Friday night, continues with Pro/Am Short Track and Hooligan racing Saturday, and concludes with the season finale main event and AMA awards banquet on Sunday. While the Dash for Cash has been eliminated throughout the series, Randy and Mark Zimmerman of Specialty Fabrications have put up \$5,000 to honor this tradition at Santa Rosa, and Ramspur Winery will be adding to this purse as well.

And oh yeah, there'll be men and women throwing motorcycles sideways at 130 MPH—not to be missed.

The Santa Rosa Mile happens this September 23-25 at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds, 1350 Bennett Valley Rd, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. Get tickets and more info at [SantaRosaMile.com](http://SantaRosaMile.com). @

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Motorcycle Flat Track is the original form of motorcycle racing in the U.S. The Bay Area has been a major hub of the sport for decades.

## HERE'S OUR BAY AREA GUIDE TO THIS NATIONAL PRO EVENT

### BAY AREA TEAMS: >>>>>>

**ROGERS RACING:** Owner Craig Rogers has been in the sport for 27 years and his rider is Jared Mees, 3 time Grand National Champion.  
Rider: #1 Jared "The Jammer" Mees

**ZANOTTI RACING:** Dave Zanotti has run Zanotti Racing since 2006. His current riders Jake Johnson and Kenny Coolbeth are former Grand National Champions.  
Riders: #2 Kenny Coolbeth #5 Jake Johnson

**KENNEDY RACING:** Team owner Jerry Kennedy has been involved in the sport for decades but is new to team ownership, but is already a force with Brandon Robinson winning this year's Lima Half Mile event.  
Rider: #44 Brandon Robinson



Jared "The Jammer" Mees   Kenny Coolbeth   Jake Johnson   Brandon Robinson

### BAY AREA RIDERS: >>>>>>

**Stevie Bonsey GNC1 #80** Stevie has notched several GNC victories and many podium finishes. Unfortunately, Stevie suffered a broken neck at the Springfield Mile this year and will sit out this race.

**Mikey Rush GNC1 #54** Mikey hails from Gilroy and has ridden the national pro circuit since 2009. He won Daytona in 2013.

**Ryan Foster GNC1 #23Y** Ryan is from San Jose and is a consistent rider. In 2014, he landed on the podium in Calistoga.

**Andrew Luker GNC2 #11Z** Only 18 years old, Andrew has already notched three GNC2 wins in his short career.

**LOCATION:**  
SONOMA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS,  
1350 BENNETT VALLEY RD,  
SANTA ROSA, CA

**TICKET AND CONTACT INFO:**  
[WWW.SANTAROSAMILE.COM](http://WWW.SANTAROSAMILE.COM)  
844-722-6453-722-6453

### NOTABLE BAY AREA SPONSORS: >>>>>>

**Rod Lake:** Rod has been a force in sponsoring riders from youth to pro. His mark upon the sport is indelible.

**Steve DeLorenzi:** Steve has been involved in pro flat track for years with SDI Racing. In addition to his sponsorships, Steve has been involved in promoting AMA national races at Sacramento, Calistoga and this year's Santa Rosa Mile.

**Ramspur Winery:** Terry & Nancy Otton have been significant sponsors and they are co-promoting the event this year.

**Specialty Fabrication:** The Zimmerman brothers have been generous sponsors providing substantial purse money to riders over the years.

**Motion Pro:** This organization has supported flat track racing for decades in the Bay Area.

### HOOIGANS ARE ARRIVING >>>>>>

Much of the credit for the resurgence of flat track goes to the Hooligan class for bringing back grass roots racing. Super Hooligan stars Roland Sands headline this all-star zany cast on Saturday night.



### PRE-RACE ACTIVITIES >>>>>>

The Barnaby Company is the place to be on the Wednesday night before the mile. This shop hosts an open house and all variety of builders, racers and hangers-on attend, 954 Shulman Ave, Santa Clara, 5:00 PM.

Marin Speed Shop is hosting a BBQ and "meet and greet" with Triumph rider Jake Shoemaker prior to the event. Check the Santa Rosa Mile Facebook page for details on the time and date.

### WEEKEND SCHEDULE: <img alt="hand icon" data-bbox="584 802 635 821"/> >

**FRIDAY:** CFTA AMATEUR SHORT TRACK RACE, CHRIS BECK ARENA, RACER SIGN-IN AT 11 AM, SPECTATOR GATES OPEN AT 4:30 PM

**SATURDAY:** CFTA PRO/AM & HOOIGAN SHORT TRACK RACE, CHRIS BECK ARENA, SPECTATOR GATES OPEN AT 5 PM

**SUNDAY:** RAMSPUR WINERY SANTA ROSA MILE PRESENTED BY TRIUMPH, OPENING CEREMONIES AT 11:30 AM

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# AFM Round Five | September

8:00	<b>Riders Meeting</b>
8:25	<b>Practice Groups 1-5 RD 1</b>
9:30	<b>Practice Groups 1-5 RD 2</b>
10:50	<b>Practice Groups 1-5 RD 3</b>
12:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>
1:00	<b>Practice Groups 1-5 RD 4</b>
2:10	<b>Practice Groups 1-5 RD 5</b> <b>NRS Practice Starts</b>
3:15	<b>National Anthem /</b> <b>Mark Grids</b>
3:30	<b>Race 1: Clubman Light</b>
	<b>Race 1: Formula III</b> <i>Sponsored by Spears Racing</i>
	<b>Race 1: Vintage</b>
3:50	<b>Race 2: Formula 40 Heavy</b> <i>Sponsored by JPH Suspension</i>
	<b>Race 2: Formula 40 Mid</b> <i>Sponsored by JPH Suspension</i>
	<b>Race 3: AFemme</b> <i>Sponsored by MCTechnologies</i>
4:20	<b>Race 3: Formula 40 Light</b> <i>Sponsored by JPH Suspensio</i>
	<b>Race 3: 350 Production</b> <i>Sponsored by Feel Like A Pro</i>
	<b>Race 4: Formula 50</b>
4:40	<b>Race 4: Clubman Heavy</b>
	<b>Race 4: Clubman Middle</b>



8:00	<b>Practice Groups 1-5</b>
9:15	<b>Riders Meeting</b>
9:45	<b>Race 1: 450 Production</b>
	<b>Race 1: 650 Twins</b>
	<b>Race 1: Formula II</b>
10:05	<b>Race 2: 750 Production</b>
	<b>Race 2: Legacy Heavy</b>
10:30	<b>Race 3: 450 Superbike</b>
	<b>Race 3: 250 Production</b>
	<b>Race 3: Legacy 250</b>
10:50	<b>Race 4: Open Production</b> <i>Sponsored by San Jose BMW</i>
	<b>Race 4: Open Twins</b>
11:15	<b>Race 5: 600 Production</b> <i>Sponsored by Keigwins@theTrack</i>
11:40	<b>Race 6: Open GP</b> <i>Sponsored by Fastline Cycles</i>
	<b>Race 6: Super Dino</b>
12:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>
1:05	<b>Race 7: Formula I</b> <i>Sponsored by Galfer Brakes</i>
1:30	<b>Race 8: Formula IV</b>
	<b>Race 8: Legacy Middle</b>
1:55	<b>Race 9: Formula Pacific</b> <i>Sponsored by Dunlop Race Tire Services</i>
2:40	<b>Winner's Circle Presentation</b>
	<b>Race 10: 700 Production</b>
	<b>Race 10: Lightweight Twins</b> <i>Sponsored by Spears Racing</i>
3:00	<b>Race 10: Formula Singles</b>
	<b>Race 11: 600 Superbike</b>
3:25	<b>Race 12: Open Superbike</b> <i>Sponsored by Pacific Track Time</i>
3:55	<b>Race 13: 750 Superbike</b>
4:20	<b>Race 14: 250 Superbike</b> <i>Sponsored by Catalyst Reaction</i>
	<b>Race 14: Legacy Light</b>



### Pit Rules:

- Speed limit in the pits is a walking pace (5mph).
- No intentional wheelies, stoppies, or other exhibitions of speed.
- Kids under the age of 16 may not ride or be a passenger on any pitbike.
- Pets must be leashed at all times.
- Please be aware of traffic in the pits at all times.
- Riders are responsible for their pit crew and guests.
- Alcohol abuse and drug use is prohibited.
- Only entered riders and race officials may enter the racing surface.

### Paddock Vendors

- |                              |                          |                     |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Catalyst Reaction Suspension | CT Racing Pirelli        | Serious RnD         |
| Dunlop Race Tire Service     | Ocean Heat               | Sportbike Upgrades  |
| Fastline Cycles              | Pacific Track Time       | Texas Tea Oil       |
| Feel Like A Pro              | Project Serenity Massage | Trackside Massage   |
| Galfer                       | Race Pace Motorsports    | VnM Motorsports     |
| GP Suspension                | Racer Gloves             | Zoom Zoom Trackdays |

## Huge thanks to the 2016 AFM club sponsors



# 3-4 | Sonoma Raceway



If you have ever wondered how the AFM came to be, wonder no more! Thanks to Paul Ritter, author of the book "Racing the Gods" (Available from Octane Press) we are going to get you all caught up on AFM history. The article below is an excerpt from his blog ([paulritterblog.wordpress.com](http://paulritterblog.wordpress.com))

## Part Three: 1965 – 1969 The Rebuilding Years.

1965 was a pivotal year for the AFM. The collapse of AFM National when Wes Cooley resigned to start the rival ACA left the club badly disorganized and it could have been the end. Fortunately a group from the S.F. Chapter, led by Dee Davis, Brent Stockwell and Harry Webster, were willing to pick up the ball that Cooley had dropped. By February 1965 the club was re-incorporated with the state, a new set of Articles and By-Laws had been adopted and the chapters were working on their race schedules. The new By-Laws still had the Chairman appointed by the Board of Directors, but members of the Board of Directors were elected from within each chapter. The AFM appears to have started 1965 with three chapters; San Francisco, Sacramento, and the trials-oriented chapter in St. Louis, Missouri.

The new organization must have worked. By July of 1965 two new chapters had been added, Santa Barbara and the Bay Cities Motor Club. The BCMC was based in the San Francisco area but they ran scrambles, not road races, so kept separate from the older S.F. Chapter. Later that year the Los Angeles chapter reformed and rejoined the club. The L.A. Chapter president was either John McLaughlin or Gene Wise. It's not clear from my sources which one. Perhaps they each took a turn. Both men were part of the group of the original founders (Gene Wise is rumored to have been the first person to road race Yamahas in the U.S.). The club ran road races mostly at Cotati and Vacaville, with one race that year at Hanford and one at Santa Barbara. The 1965 Santa Barbara race was held jointly with a sports car club. That was the last AFM race at Santa Barbara as attempts to hold bike-only events at that track never worked out.

The AFM was not just a road race club during this period. The St. Louis chapter ran observed trials events, and the BCMC ran scrambles at Champion Speedway in San Francisco. In November 28th the club ran an enduro and on January 1st, 1966, there was an AFM Motocross!

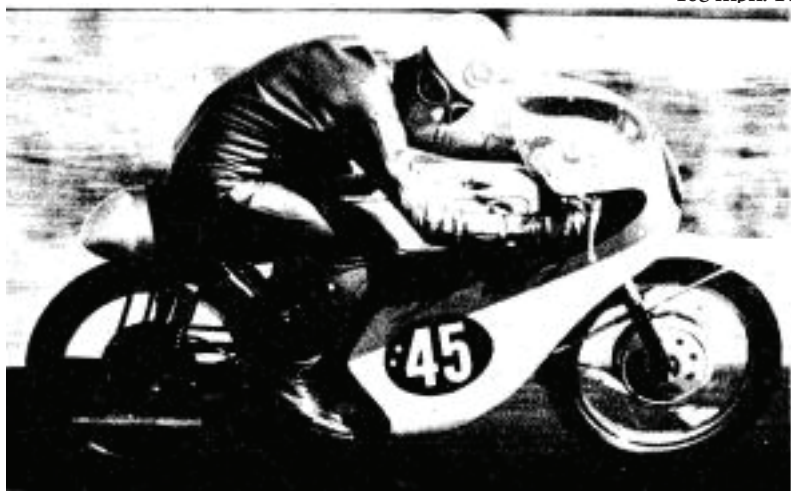
In 1966 the National part of the AFM moved from San Francisco to Santa Barbara as a sidecar racing British gent named Reg Pridmore became Chairman of the Board. Things had settled down compared to the hectic 1965. The L.A. Chapter began running road races at Orange County International Raceway (OCIR) on a nearly monthly basis, with Jim Manning providing the organizational lead. In NorCal the S.F. Chapter ran road races at Cotati and the Sacramento chapter organized races at Vacaville. Both tracks were old airports and it appears that

the Cotati site allowed for different courses by combining different runways and taxiways to form a circuit.

This was the basic pattern for the club during the years 1966-1967: road races at Cotati, OCIR and occasionally Vacaville. There's no mention of the St. Louis Chapter during this time, so they either left the AFM or just kept doing their trials events. At some point in the early 1970s they did disappear from the AFM.

The BCMC reported trouble finding new members as the AMA was putting pressure on dirt riders not to join "outlaw" clubs. The BCMC dropped out after 1966, at least in part due to this pressure. The suggestion was made that the AFM concentrate on road races since at that time the AMA didn't care about European-style road racing and would not bother the members.

In 1967 a Las Vegas chapter was formed and the club held a road race at the small Stardust Raceway. The L.V. Chapter seems to have



disappeared quickly as the only other race at Stardust was organized by the S.F. Chapter, it seems.

The L.A. Chapter ran a few races at Carlsbad Raceway as well as OCIR during these years. At one point they tried tying in with a motocross group to run motocross in the morning and road races in the afternoon at Carlsbad, but this setup didn't last. The late Cal Rayborn, who would eventually become one of America's best road racers, ran in some Carlsbad events, using them for development of the 350cc Harley Sprint racers.

Besides Rayborn, other names familiar to some of you started racing in AFM events, including Ron Grant, Tony Murphy and Don Vesco. Youngsters Art Bauman and Steve McLaughlin were beginning to appear more often near the top of the results sheets. In 1967 Reg Pridmore tried his hand at two-wheel racing with a Honda S90 in the 100cc G.P. class. In 1968 Hurley Wilvert was winning 350cc production events on a Bridgestone (yes, youngsters, Bridgestone made motorcycles back then), while Ron Pierce and Don Emde were racing against each other in the 250cc G.P. class.

By 1969 a new San Diego Chapter joined the AFM as the racing at Carlsbad increased interest in that part of California. The S.D. Chapter added something new to the AFM's repertoire — speed trials, organized by the chapter in April of 1969 at Laguna Seca in Baja Mexico (not the one near Monterey, CA), although this appears to have been a one-time-only event. The Clerk

of the Course was none other than Don Vesco. Vesco set a speed of 147.05 mph on a 350cc Yamaha, and apparently got the speed bug in a big way. He was a Bonneville regular for years after that, setting the absolute motorcycle speed record at over 300 mph. [In 1978 at 318.598 mph, a record that stood for 12 years.] It seems that the San Diego chapter faded away and didn't renew in 1970.

The machines of the period showed that the dominance of the European and British bikes was fading. By the end of 1969 only the Open G.P. class was still a British stronghold. Elsewhere the winners were more and more often on Japanese machinery. In the lightweight classes there was some fairly exotic stuff. Honda twin cylinder racers were showing up, pukka race bikes not modified production motors. Double overhead cams, 4 valves per cylinder. Finishing charts show lots of races won by the CR-110 (50cc) and CR-93 (125cc) Hondas. Haruo Koshino had an ex-works Suzuki 50cc bike, with a 9 speed gearbox(!) and a top end of 105 mph. The Yamaha TD series racers were in

production and Kawasaki came up with its A-1R for the 250cc class. Hopped up Honda 305cc Super Hawks were scoring well in the 350cc Production class and Suzuki Titans and CB450 Hondas were beginning to push the British bikes out of the 500cc G.P. class as well. The previously top bikes Norton Manx and Matchless G-50s were nearly gone and would soon disappear, only to be seen at shows and vintage races.

Another important trend during this period was the growing popularity of the Production classes. Introduced to the AFM in the early 1960s by the S.F. Chapter, Production class racing was seen as "support" to the G.P. classes, where the real racing took place. By the end of the 1960s Production racing was taken nearly as seriously as the G.P. classes, and the 250 mile Production class at Cotati was somewhat of a classic.

The late sixties was pretty volatile, with several chapters joining then disappearing. Starting with nearly nothing in 1965 the club seemed healthy and active. There were chapters in San Francisco, San Diego, Los Angeles, Sacramento and St. Louis, MO. Another measure of the club's success was the depth of talent it held. The top ten G.P. riders for 1969 were:

1. Don Emde 2. Hurley Wilvert 3. Ron Grant 4. Rudy Galindo 5. Ron Pierce 6. Don Vesco 7. Ralph LeClerk 8. Art Bauman 9. Stan Smith 10. Jack Simmons

Of these ten, six went on to become AMA Expert ranked riders, and five of them were on factory racing teams during their careers. A seventh, Vesco, became the fastest man on two wheels. Not bad for a small racing club.

To read more about the history of the AFM (and for other great articles) visit [paulritterblog.wordpress.com](http://paulritterblog.wordpress.com). Be sure to pick up a copy of his book "Racing The Gods" available from Octane Press.

## Seat time makes you FASTER!!!

Whether you are a pro racer or a c-group back marker, the more time you put in on your bike, the less time it will take you to get around the track.

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19 Mon Thunderhill East  
20 Tues Thunderhill East

### October

5 Wed 2 Day Intermediate  
6 Thurs Thunderhill East  
7 Fri Thunderhill West  
8 Sat Thunderhill East  
9 Sun Thunderhill East  
22 Sat Thunderhill West  
23 Sun Thunderhill West

### November

1 Tues Laguna-Seca  
2 Wed Laguna-Seca  
14 Mon Sonoma  
29 Mon Laguna-Seca  
30 Tues Laguna-Seca

## Pacific Track Time

### September

3 Thunderhill West  
4 Thunderhill West  
24 Buttonwillow  
25 Buttonwillow

### October

15 Thunderhill West  
16 Thunderhill West

### November

5 Thunderhill East  
6 Thunderhill East



# Peanut Envy

By Surj Gish  
Photos by Angelica Rubalcaba

I've got a weird thing for Sportsters. Never owned one, but years ago, I went to Los Angeles to see former Avengers bassist and later Chris Isaak's (former) guitar player, James Calvin Wilsey, play his beautifully slow guitar instrumentals in some shit-shack dive. Master of Puppets Angelica and I ended up hanging with him and four of his sloppy drunk friends, post-show. I had a deep conversation with one of those four, who was something of a Sportster advocate, committed to spreading the gospel and righting the wrongs it's endured, misunderstood as a beginner bike, or even worse, a "girl's bike."

"You just need to look at the history of the bike to dispel that shit," he said, and it stuck with me. I've been caught cruising El Listo de Craig for a Sportster Roadster, but in spite of having enough tattoos to be mistaken for a capital-B Biker or maybe one of Devine's Bikesters, I'm a utility rider and I just can't see bolting a topcase on to such a spare machine, meaning it won't get ridden much. A bike that doesn't get ridden doesn't have a place in my garage, and anyway, that place is already occupied by an immobile 900SS—that goddamn thing.

Earlier this year, I was headed south outta Portland after a good dose of Bikester-brewed coffee at See-See, and stopped at an H-D shop. Down on my knees to see if there's actually any space between the bottom of a Forty-Eight's engine and the ground, a salesman strikes up a

# Harley-Davidson Sportster Forty-Eight

conversation with me: "Pretty cool. For, you know, a *little* bike."

Fuckin' A, man. It's 1200 CCs, and you're supposed to be selling me one of these right now, not assuming a *real man* is probably more interested in some bagger.

Maybe I'm overreacting, and I just don't look like a real man.

Anyway... we're naturally kinda nasty, so when a Harley (or any bike, really) shows up in the *CityBike* World HQ garage, first thing we do is start picking it apart:

"Ain't gonna go far with that li'l tank. Wish they'd put two rotors on the front. 1.63 inches of travel?"

But... who gives a fuck about any of that? This is a bike with a singular purpose, stripped to the bare minimum. H-D calls it an "urban brawler," which evokes the right imagery—city-bound badass, tough guy from the block.

You can't tell me that the Forty-Eight is any less functional for round-towning than all these slow-as-frozen-shit café / brat / whatever bikes, with their over-sporty ergos to give Rossi a sore back, and the reliability of Skully's production schedule.

Actually, you *can* tell me one of those brat-fés is better than the Forty-Eight, but I'll call bullshit and you'll have to concede, because you know it's true.

If the name of the game is cruising and looking the part, you gotta commit. The cosmetics industry talks achieving beauty through pain, using words like "stinging," phrases like "if it's not burning, it's not working." Similarly, if you're talking about suspension travel, you're missing the point.

And anyway, there's not much to talk about, because there isn't much suspension to speak of. That's not a dig—it's unlikely the Forty-Eights were rolling off the line and someone said, "Oh shit—we forgot suspension!" It's just a function of the intended purpose of the bike, which is—again—cruising 'round and looking cool.

You get 1.63" out back, and a generous 3.62" up front, supplemented by another 18" or so of travel in the sidewall of that rubber doughnut mounted up front where a tire would normally be. That's right—you get a combined total of about 5" of travel between both ends, and *you like it*.

You know you do.

I know I do. The Forty-Eight is *gorgeous*. An tried to drink the paint, and I spent a half hour or so with a pen and paper, listing all the things I'd need to do to the damn thing to make it a workable utility bike, without ruining its simplistic shapeliness.

I gave up on that list, because it would have ruined the bike, and I really want

does it matter, you big girl's blouse? Check out how killer it looks!" That'd be irresponsible, though, even if An and Max have it covered.

So here's what riding the Forty-Eight is like. You forget your job, your bills, your spouse that's likely to backhand you back into reality for spending \$11,119 (\$11,649 in that beautiful "hard candy" burgundy) on a bike that you can't ride more than a few miles without starting an internal conversation about the other motorcycle you need, for longer rides. You forget everything but this moment, this rumbling to some mysterious, potentially troublesome, dangerous location a few blocks away.

You don't forget that the bike is pretty goddamn uncomfortable, but you don't tell your friends that, because it'll ruin your carefully cultivated *outlaw* image. Nor do you forget how two front brake rotors are better than one or that there's are good reason riders don't run these ridiculously fat fronts any more, except for photo shoots. You also hopefully don't forget to get gas frequently, or you'll be remembering what it's like to walk home pushing a motorcycle that's 551 pounds wet—minus gas, of course.

Look, we're all living some fantasy. A bunch of us are essentially middle-aged middle managers with Corvettes, maybe younger, and on two wheels. Others are basically well-documented Mitty-esque dreamers, with every *adventure* captured online for all to see, the constantly refreshing modern day equivalent of an olden days slideshow. If your flavor of fantasy is back alley badassery, old school tough guy about town, the Forty-Eight may be your motorcycle.

**Sangria & Spice,  
Everything Nice**  
By An DeYoung

It's a rare that I get my hands around the grips of one of the test bikes in the expansive garages of *CityBike* World HQ,

a Roadster anyway. Better to leave the Forty-Eight brutally basic, like the hardtail Shovelhead that Miki, the dude who used to tattoo me in the early '90s, used to ride. I remember him hopping some train tracks, breaking one of his footpegs off the frame, and riding home a hundred miles home from there.

If you don't aspire to that level of bad motherfuckery, this ain't the bike for you.

Do we really need to talk about details? Everyone who's anyone that rides knows what a Sportster is: 1,202 CCs (73.4 cubic inches, if you prefer *real American*) of no-nonsense Harley-Davidson tradition. It's got typical Harley fit, finish and refinement, and feels a lot more like an \$11,000 bike than a lot of other \$11,000 bikes.

I'm really tempted to not even write about riding it, to just close with "What





what with being situated up in The Sac. Usually, I wait for a call from Max, telling me Editor Surj has fallen asleep at his desk—he's a heavy sleeper and no one, including him, can hear a damn thing over that snoring.

So when Editor Surj called asking if I'd like to come down to ride around on one of these hip-happenin' round-towners, I jumped. First with surprise, then at the chance.

I won the rock-paper-scissors-Spock contest so I got first pick. I was born in Wisconsin so it was no contest, doncha know. Gimme that bad ass Forty-Eight.

Max lit up the Bolt and off we went for a Wrecking Crew Ride Out, minus the lingerie-clad Instagrammery. I acclimated to the Forty-Eight pretty quickly, probably due to my Midwestern roots, but I must say that fat front tire is not as cushiony as it looks. Neither is my ass, unfortunately, but more about that later. Maybe.

The Forty-Eight's paint is like candy, or a tall glass of sangria—one of the best paint jobs I've seen on a bike. The bummer was that there wasn't much of that beautiful color—that tasty sangria gloss is only sprayed on the tiny peanut tank. First introduced in 1948—hence the name—the peanut tank holds 2.1 gallons. Just enough to get to the gas station, the store for some pomade, the bar for a craft beer, maybe some artisanal toast at the food truck outside, and then back home—if you live fairly close. A peanut's worth of gas, if you will. No big deal for the photo shoot, of course—which was mostly posing—but I left my atypically utilitarian Duc with Editor Surj and took the Forty-Eight back home to oppressive heat of The Sac.

As I exited the gilded gates of *CityBike* World HQ, I realized my first stop had better be the gas station. Cost me peanuts to fill up. Get it?

20 minutes on the freeway and a deep feeling of regret was creeping up my spine. I'm tall, and the Forty-Eight's riding position is pretty upright for me, thanks to my long arms. But with my feet out front, I was still essentially folded in half, with no pegs to stand on to relieve that deep feeling of regret I mentioned now wracking my back.

Traffic started clearing and I was able to open it up. The "girl's bike" engine offers smooth acceleration, but isn't as torquy as you might expect from a biggish twin. It's comfortable cruising along at about 70 mph, with something extra if needed.

The suspension is a little jarring. Actually, a lot jarring, because there's just a little suspension. But an hour into my back to The Sac ride, I figured out how to use the limited travel to my benefit—I'd aim for the occasional freeway bump to bounce my ass up off the seat for a quick break. By Dixon I was happy to stop for gas, just to get off for a stretch. A long stretch.



By Sacramento, I never wanted to see the Forty-Eight again. I talked to friends and even a couple of strangers with Harleys—maybe it was just me, perhaps a lack of understanding of the bike's charms. Everyone I spoke to was surprised I'd attempted such a "long" ride on it. What Editor Surj didn't tell me was that apparently, Sportsters are bar-hopping, 'round-towning, looking good bikes, not road trip bikes—even if your road trip is 90 miles. I've heard Sportsters referred to as *chick bikes*—is it because you have to be a proper bad ass with a high tolerance for pain?

*An is queen of CityBike's Sactown operations, and occasionally joins us here in the Bay Area for a bit of riding and pain. We're trying to get her on another Harley—Midwestern heritage and all that.*

## Low, Dark & Handsome

By Max Klein

Harley claims the Forty-Eight has been redesigned with "more low-slung Dark Custom™ attitude than ever." I'm taking their word for it, as I've not ridden the previous version—which seems to have suffered a problematic lack of attitude, specifically in the low-slung Dark Custom™ region, wherever that is.

After the (dare I say) brilliant Lowrider S experience, I was pretty stoked to fire up this retro-inspired machine. Retro-

inspired? Well, yeah. The "48" tank has been updated with '70s styling, the bulbous front tire is a hipster's wet dream, and the burglar alarm air filter cover is a very classic touch.

The motor outshines the minimal chrome bits and actually rips, for a "girl's bike," if you listen to the leather-clad tattoo monsters at the bar. It finds its stride in the lower portions of the rev range, but is very much at home around 80 mph.

But while the motor is happy at 80, the rest of the machine, well... not so much. That Bike EXIF-worthy front tire shimmies like Shakira above 60 mph, like trying to ride a mechanical Charlie Sheen—not that I have ridden the organic Charlie. Bad analogy. Think *Papa Was a Rolling Stone*, or Michael Jackson's dad... whatever. It was all over the place, following freeway grooves like it was getting paid piece rate by the line, while the rear seemed to be happy to stay on the straight and narrow.

Here's the thing—while I did feel like I could be thrown from the saddle at any time, I didn't care. I wicked that bastard up to 80(ish) and Motor Co'ed on down the freeway, hanging on as best I could, given the funky ergonomics.

Funky stops being fun about fifteen minutes into any journey—actually quite convenient, and good planning on The MoCo's part, as that's about when you need to stop and fill up the tiny tank.

Kidding. Kind of. While it *was* more than fifteen minutes, high speeds meant I was typically shy of fuel just shy of an hour.

Anyway.

The footpegs are about ten inches forward of the average modern café / bobber / tracker bike being ridden away from a video camera in an unnecessary barrage

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**State Farm**



of sparks. I found the bars a little too high, a little too forward, to be comfortable—which combined with the forward pegs puts you in a riding position that I can only describe as "aggressive pooping."

I apologize in advance if Editor Surj leaves that in.

Anyway...

I'm pretty sure I didn't ride the machine as intended—I spent most of my time looking for hell to raise on the road, instead of the local pool hall / bar / coffee shop.

*Max is the SF chapter Director of the AFM and one of our premier road testers (and truck drivers). He "got the Harley" thing aboard our Low Rider S back in our July 2016 issue. 🌀*

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Photo: Bonnie Kellogg



# Higher Learning

## The Total Control Advanced Rider Clinic At 2 Wheel Safety Training

By Sam Devine  
Photos by Bonnie Kellogg  
and Max Klein

A relatively new rider told me he wanted the most protective boots ever so that he could put a foot down in the twisties on Mount Tam. It was hard to explain to him that things didn't necessarily work that way. But he persisted: "What about really tight turns?"

This is exactly the type of overconfidence that's worrisome. He's stoked, ready to take on anything, and bragging that his old boots have 15,000 miles on them. He reminds me of myself after I rode to and from Chicago. I was sure I had solved the mystery of motorcycling. It was time to hang up the proverbial spurs, smoke a pipe by the fire, and recount my glory days to the whippersnappers.

Little did I know that I was still a greenhorn. Still am. In fact, as the years go by, all I'm learning is how much more there is to know. I'm realizing, somewhat painfully at times, that there are certain things I'll never understand—not for a lack of trying or a

lack of desire—but because there just won't be time.

So my candle has been burning at both ends for some time now, and I show up to the level one Total Control Advanced Rider Clinic overworked and severely under-rested. But I'm ready to give every last ounce of effort my buzzing neon bulb of a brain can muster.

A half-helmeted, chaps-wearing Harley rider named Mike gives an enthusiastic welcome. It turns out that he's taking the advanced



Photo: Bonnie Kellogg

level two course for the second time. "I've taken both classes twice," he explains. "Not because I don't get it, but because I don't get it!" With that he belts out a good guffaw.

The level two instructor asks what tire pressure I'm running and hands me an air pressure gauge. Last time I checked, Dr. Ninja's tire pressures had been running in the high teens, but I'm ashamed to find that it's a minor miracle that I've made it to Santa Clara—each tire is holding about 10 psi. So that's why I was getting front end wash... ahhh... learning already.

We walk past flowers and concrete columns and across the green lawns of the Mission College of Santa Clara. The classroom contains eleven other would-be students of corner-ology, hoping to glean insights and abilities from the course designed by Lee Parks, based on his book *Total Control*. We go through introductions: name, bike, experience and expectations. Bike-wise, the room is weighted heavily with BMW riders: there are three R1200 GS riders, an F650GS and

an F700. There are two American cruisers, two Honda sport bikes, a Triumph Street Triple, a Ducati Monster and my oily Suzuki dual sport.

"Is that the Dr. Ninja of *CityBike* fame?" asks Kerri Dougherty, whose neighbor has been passing our paper her way—now that's a good neighbor in our opinion! This remark leaves your reporter slightly—but hopefully imperceptibly—verklempt.

Dougherty recently sold off most of her possessions and rode out of Maryland to her new home in Oakland. She's here today on her new F650GS. She's every bit the badass, tattooed moto babe, but is humble enough to be seeking more riding knowledge. She wanted to take an advanced cornering class before leaving the East Coast but ran out of time, signing up for this clinic as soon as she could.

The rest of the class had heard about the clinic from various channels. Santa Cruz resident, GS rider, and *CityBike* subscriber, Greg Rowley had heard about the class from the flier inserted in the book. "I bought Lee Parks' book and started reading it before I knew they were doing the courses."

Ninja 300 rider Jamie Kruse heard about the course through her friend David Marchaland. He's riding a CB500F today and—though he's been riding less than a year—has stayed on top of his motorcycle education and is riding really well. After completing the basic rider course, he took an intermediate course, which then recommended this advanced class. I wish I had sought out instruction as eagerly and immediately as he has. Instead, I'll be spending the rest of my life ironing out my bad habits.

After introductions, our instructors Colleen Sepulveda and William Sommers promise us that we'll improve our riding skills, understand riding better and increase problem recognition on the road. In return, they ask that we keep an open mind and accept coaching. This is the second time a program has made this request of me and it has made so much sense both times. Hear me out, then decide what you think for yourself. It's just polite.

We first talk about traction management. We learn how to read tire codes and cover some basic theory: lower tire pressure and softer rubber compounds offer better traction; higher pressures and harder

compounds give more longevity to the tire; acceleration and deceleration; changes in lean angle; center of gravity; road conditions. These all affect traction.

Then there's a trail braking discussion: importance of smooth throttle control and braking. We head out to the range to work on some very basic but necessary tasks. We accelerate and decelerate slowly, trying not to compress the suspension. We do it in a straight line, first with only the throttle and then with the brakes as well. Trail braking is generally thought to be for cornering but it can (and should) absolutely be practiced in a straight line.



Photo: Max Klein

The exercises are fundamentally simple, but are the type of challenge that separates "could" from "did." We all say, "I could do that." But not all of us can say, "I have done that." It reminds me of classical music exercises where we were trained to warm up with "long tones," drawing the bow across the string extremely slowly, taking twenty or even thirty seconds to play a single note. It's like Tai Chi, doing something simple—as slowly and as focused as possible. Sure, we all want to do rolling burnouts, but we've got to start with basic throttle control.

Ducati rider and SF resident Scot Brenton confirms this association, saying, "I'm a musician and you practice things slow because if you can't do it slow, you damn sure can't play it fast."

Kurt Petersdorff comes up to me and I recognize him as the cool guy with the Speed Triple that I gave a brush-up lesson to while working for Monkey Moto School a little over a year ago. "You've been riding pretty much forever," Kurt asks me. "Right?"

"Well," I say, again taken a little off-guard. "I've been riding a little over ten years. There's always more to learn and there's also seeing how they present the information." At first I'm worried about performing well in front of a former student. But by the end of the day I'm just happy to see him doing well—really well,

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Photo: Bonnie Kellogg

riding outside of our tense, survival-oriented lizard brains.

We practice an interesting trust fall that simulates a motorcycle lean. And to practice being physical aware of our turn-in points, we walk out and pick up objects with our eyes closed. We discuss meditation, inner quiet, and the importance of a positive attitude. "Whether

you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right," says Sepulveda, riffing on a quote attributed to Henry Ford.

We return to the range and take turns supporting each other on our own bikes as we practice body position in a lean. "I was overwhelmed and in disbelief that it would work," says Dougherty. We work on widening and relaxing our focus, trying to take in a cone pattern like a swirling constellation. We practice flopping into turns.

After breaking for lunch, we return to the classroom to get the ten points of turning according to Lee Parks, then back out to the range again to run drills that incorporate everything we've learned for the day. I look across the parking lot to see Mike killing it on his Harley in the Level 2

obstacles course. We wrap things up with a brief but effective lesson on suspension adjustment.

As I ride home, I think about how we've all been given advice on cornering: body position, traction, shifting, trail-braking, mental thought process, staying loose, staying focused, looking through the turn. But this course put it all in sequence, particularly the step-by-step breakdown of cornering. It was like hearing a good version of a familiar story—like the myth of Hercules or Batman's origin—and all the way through for a change. And we didn't just hear the tale: we played it out,



Photo: Bonnie Kellogg

interacted with it, became the story of total control.

I'm happy to say that the promises of improved skills, recognition and understanding seem to have held true. As I ride my commute now, my bike slips around corners much smoother than before and my body moves around with a

in fact. Darth Vader's voice rings in my head, "Sho, the shtudent hash become the mashtah." Or is that Sean Connery saying it?

We return to the classroom and focus on mentality: how we get scared, why we get scared. "Being honest with each other about all being a bit uneasy was helpful," says Dougherty. It is good insight, but we're spending a lot of time in the classroom—and only about 30% drilling. "It would be nice to have a longer stretch to try the trail braking and exercises like that," says Kruse after the course.

Thinking now about the lessons we received on how the brain works, though, it seems that spending focused time imagining riding could actually be more beneficial than a lot of hard riding exercises. We're told that survival and fear reside in our lizard brain while creativity and planning come from our frontal lobes. All the discussion and concentration on the ideas of riding are getting our frontal lobes warmed up so we can practice

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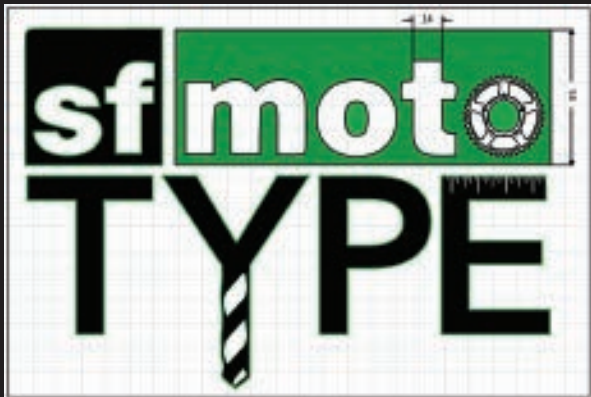


more focused intent. Dougherty confirms, "At the end of the day I was feeling 100% different, excited and more confident."

Hopefully I can stay humble and continue practicing and seeking more information.

Total Control's next riding clinic is Saturday, September 14. The cost is \$325, which, if you can afford it, is a small price to pay to unlock a lifetime of riding skills. For more information, go to [2WheelSafety.com](http://2WheelSafety.com) or [TotalControlTraining.net](http://TotalControlTraining.net).

*Sam is our SF-based columnist. Between writing roughly half this here mag and chasing the dragon of improved riding skills, he's working on an article about not sleeping and "seeing what happens."* @



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# Ballad Of The Bikester

By Sam Devine  
 Illustration by Sam Devine  
 Photos by Surj Gish, Max Klein,  
 and Sam Devine

“Y<sup>e</sup>t here, Laertes! aboard,  
 aboard, for shame!  
 The wind sits in the shoulder  
 of your sail,  
 And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing  
 with thee.”

You see them ride by like internal combustion banshees, ankles shining in the sun. Perhaps they're bearded, sporting flowing locks and a sheep-lined denim jacket. Lord knows they're wearing tight pants and a retro-styled helmet—a squid lid; a snap-buttoned atrocity of outdated engineering; an anachronism of cerebral containment; a vanity fresh for the bonfire.

But damn those suckers look cool.

They're hipster bikers. They're a thing. And much like porn or the San Francisco techie, they're hard to define—but you damn sure know 'em when you see 'em.

Taken as individuals, they're regular humans, hard-working people making their way in life. And most of us are guilty in one way or another. Who amongst us got into motorcycling for purely pragmatic reasons—with nary an interest in impressing potential mates, feeling free or looking cool?



Photo: Surj Gish

Is that crickets and a few throat-clearing coughs I hear? Well buckle up, 'cause we're about to look at just what a biker hipster is and try to figure out what it means for all of us.

“Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;  
 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade.”

**HipsterBikeVideos.com** is as good a place as any to start comparing and contrasting to find out if you may actually be guilty of biker hipsterism, a “bikester.”

One of these videos chronicles the adventures of a group that went on a motorcycle trip through the Sierras. Without calling it out by name, we'll just

say that the tag line accompanying the video's title is “334 miles in 82 hours.”

Hmmm... why do we care that a group somehow managed to average almost 4.08 mph over the course of a long weekend?

The video provides an answer:

“It's almost as if the wild was designed as a proving ground for men,” says the narrator, over bagpipes mewing in the background. He explains how meaningful it was to give up using a cell phone for 72 hours, talks about reliving boyhood memories while we watch the group pull equipment from a support truck and start a campfire with a blowtorch.

“We were dead tired,” he continues, describing their trials of making it to camp after dark. “And when we showed up, the craft cocktails and artisan food were such welcome friends under the starry sky.”

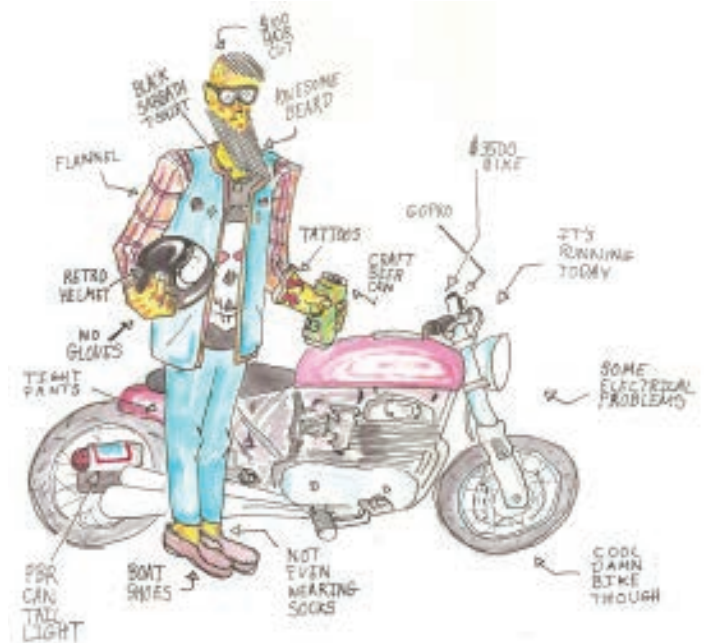
Wow. Craft cocktails and artisan food. I wonder what the amazing, strong, capable women that have ridden thousands of miles to Alaska and back, or up and down the Baja Peninsula—unassisted—would think of this artisan wilderness proving ground for men.

And gosh, I sure remember that feeling of riding till being dead tired. Of course once I pitched camp—with the meager equipment I carried on the back of my bike—I was met only with the cheap bourbon from my flask and the illegal sound of nearby prostitution. It's almost as if that field near the dilapidated waterpark in Amarillo was designed as a proving ground for falling asleep despite sketchy surroundings.

So, yes, Bikesterism is a thing. We all know it, and hell, I don't claim to be out of its scope. I'm merely the jerk at the keyboard examining this phenomenon. But Bikesterism is more than just being into motorcycles, and new at it. It's the schism that arrives between those that have been at it and those that are obviously mis- or under-informed.

“Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
 But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;  
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man,”

Take, for example, rising vintage Honda prices. The CB750 was very cutting edge



bike for its day and is still an amazing and well-proven design. But people are paying ridiculous prices for these bikes—and not just collectors. CBs of almost every size are going for much more than they were ought to be worth. One person divulged that he'd paid \$2,700—sight unseen—for a '75 CB550, then paid extra to have it shipped to San Francisco from Maine.

And that's fine, really. Good for him. He's got ducats to dump on delusions of Steve McQueen's glory days. By all means, shell out and ride on. But do yourself a favor and look around a bit to see what the options really are first. \$2,700 can buy a lot more rideability that the average '70s Honda can provide.

Things don't become popular without reason, though. To find out just what's so trend-worthy about the CB series, I asked Bay Area moto mechanic and custom fabricator, “Mild” Brian Larimer, to vouch for the kick-assosity of the CB series, specifically the 750:

“Alright, so, first off it's worth noting if comparing old motorcycles, we need to consider what existed at the time. There's no sense in comparing a CB750K with a Hayabusa. That said, the CB has many advantages: the SOHC requires a relatively short cam chain, which is less prone to stretching and harmonic losses. The

stock CB valvetrain parts are heavy, but it matters not with a stock cam. The CB follower arrangement lays out the valves in a hemisphere style chamber which is well known to make power. At the same time, it's fairly simple. Anyone with basic tools and ability to read and write can totally overhaul without a lot of professional assistance.

"The bottom end is nearly indestructible—even run low on oil, the top end gives up well ahead of the mains losing pressure—because of this an oil pressure gauge is a mandatory add on... but at least servicing the top end is easy enough.

"The presence of both electric and kick start is a *highly* desirable feature; it's rare that a CB leaves you stranded.

"Millions have been built, and to this day manufacturers are producing parts for them.

"Most of all, that sweet 4 cylinder... it may not be the fastest in stock form but they are



Sarah Holden with her CB350 Four at Any Two Wheels 2015.

Photo: Max Klein

wished to remain nameless. But, much like the CB series, the RSD line is succeeding for good reason.

Take the RSD Ronin jacket, which can be found astride many a Bonneville and vintage chop. It's a mixture of style and function that hits the mark, leaving naysayers in a field of envy just south of contempt. Like the retro Triumphs, a well-running CB or Ironhead Sporty, you can't help but wish you had one. Like the Nexx Bad Loser and Harley's Forty-Eight, it's a mixture of classic style and modern function that we will only see more of—like it or not.

"We wanted to produce a jacket that was simple, minimal in branding and really focused on material and build quality," says Sands of

the Ronin. "The great thing about the jacket is it also offers a rider fit and protection."

And event promoters are also emulating the classic style as they produce moto-meetups. At Valley of the Buzzards a few years ago, a casual alien bystander would be hard pressed to discern the scenery from a biker rally of forty years prior. Guitar players with long hair; riders with leather vests; tents pitched around campfire rings; hay bales and barbecue. Perhaps our desires haven't changed, only our technology.

Motos in Moab and Babes Ride Out are also making the moto-campout more accessible, and more people involved in motorcycling means more bikes and more gear and more events—although perhaps more crowds as we try to hold our meet-ups.

Crowds, however, mean more women getting involved in the sport. This is a good thing—and not just for sexist reasons. The San Francisco Bicycle Coalition did a study a few years ago and found women were more likely to be inclusive when it comes to the somewhat solitary sport of cycling, and this relates directly to

"Easy living. A simpler time," he says. "People are getting fed up with technology and perhaps searching for a time that was more pure... while snapchatting."

Roland Sands Designs' products are pervasive right now, sometimes to the chagrin of other motorcycle professionals. "You win one biker build-off and suddenly your parts are worth a thousand bucks," said one Bay Area mechanic who

motorcycling. When new people came looking for information, women didn't try to dissuade them from joining in, but instead shared what they knew.

And sharing knowledge is the main cure for Bikesterism. The often tragic effects of being a hipster biker are reckless self-endangerment, over-spending and flashy arrogance, all of which can be solved through mentorship. Taking a new rider under your wing, pointing out a good line and body position to them is one of the easiest ways to make the world a better place.

The last thing to confront is the cameras. One of the reports from the Motos in Moab group is that it was amazing except for the frequent posing for photos. One can hardly blame the riders—especially considering the glorious natural rock outcroppings—but sometimes you've just got to relax and enjoy the ride.

"There's all these Instagram-y babes out there," says one attendee of Babes Ride Out. "And they kind of make us look bad. I'm bad around town, but above 30 mph, we're safe and wear gear."

What one comes to discover, is that all the posing, all the GoPros and even candid shots eventually become secondary to being in the ride. A good ride can be called forth from memory with all its sights and sounds, regardless of documentation.



The author, looking pretty epic.

Photo: Surj Gish

"Riding the bikes," says Sands. "That's the next big thing. Fuck standing around and looking at them."

Which brings us to the piece of gear that's styled almost purely for the ride: the Aerostich suit. For many a year, this has been the most functional piece of motorcycle clothing devised. Hardcore, year-round riders sport a 'Stitch with defiant pride. They're not in it for the look, but for the Zen. They wear their textile onesies for the in-the-zone in one-and-a-half-zippers speed the 'Stich provides.

But while a 'Stitch is functionally attractive, it is not conventionally sexy. It doesn't show skin or display reckless abandon. It displays responsibility, intelligence and focused intent—which are

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all unfortunately still acquired tastes for our species.

It takes time—sometimes a lifetime—to find out what is real and true. For some style will always be important. For



Photo: Surj Gish

others, All The Gear All The Time will henceforth be the only modus operandi. It is quite simply up to those with experience and those without it to be respectful, receptive, and responsive to one another. We're lucky to be able to discuss these things and craft our collective future of motorcycling.

*"This above all: to thine ownself be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any [one]"*

Sam has one foot in the bikester world, one in the biker world, and another in the world of regular old motorcycling—he's got a lot of feet! Check out his latest column on page 27.

\*Quotes taken from Shakespeare's Hamlet.



Mopesters?

Photo: Surj Gish

very smooth, have a wide, fat powerband, and of course, Honda's legendary reliability. I had a CB with over 100k on the stock engine."

So it's not for naught...

I asked Sarah Holden, whose bike moved out with her from Chicago last fall, why she chooses to ride around on a vintage CB350-four cylinder. She describes a scene back east where people repair cheap, vintage bikes during the winter and then cruise around town once the weather's nice. When you consider a flat metropolis that isn't surrounded by many amazing back roads, suddenly a bike that's mostly aesthetic starts to make sense.

"I think the other thing about an old bike that's kind of fun is finding one that's in great shape," says Sarah, who says she's in about \$1,700 total on the bike, after paying for a few repairs. "It feels like such a find. It's not like anyone can just go and buy that and have it right away."

I also talked to one of the kings of motorcycling cool, Roland Sands, to get his insights on why the retro style is so *in* right now.

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# HOORAY FOR UJMS!

Illustration by Mr. Jensen

you that Yamahas or Hondas are better... and he might have sound reasons for his claims.

Because most of these liter-class UJMs produced a hundred or so horsepower, they are hard to bludgeon to death. Because they are ordinarily unfaired, it's difficult to ride them fast enough for long enough to hurt them. They are not fragile, as is evidenced by the numbers of them still on the roads.

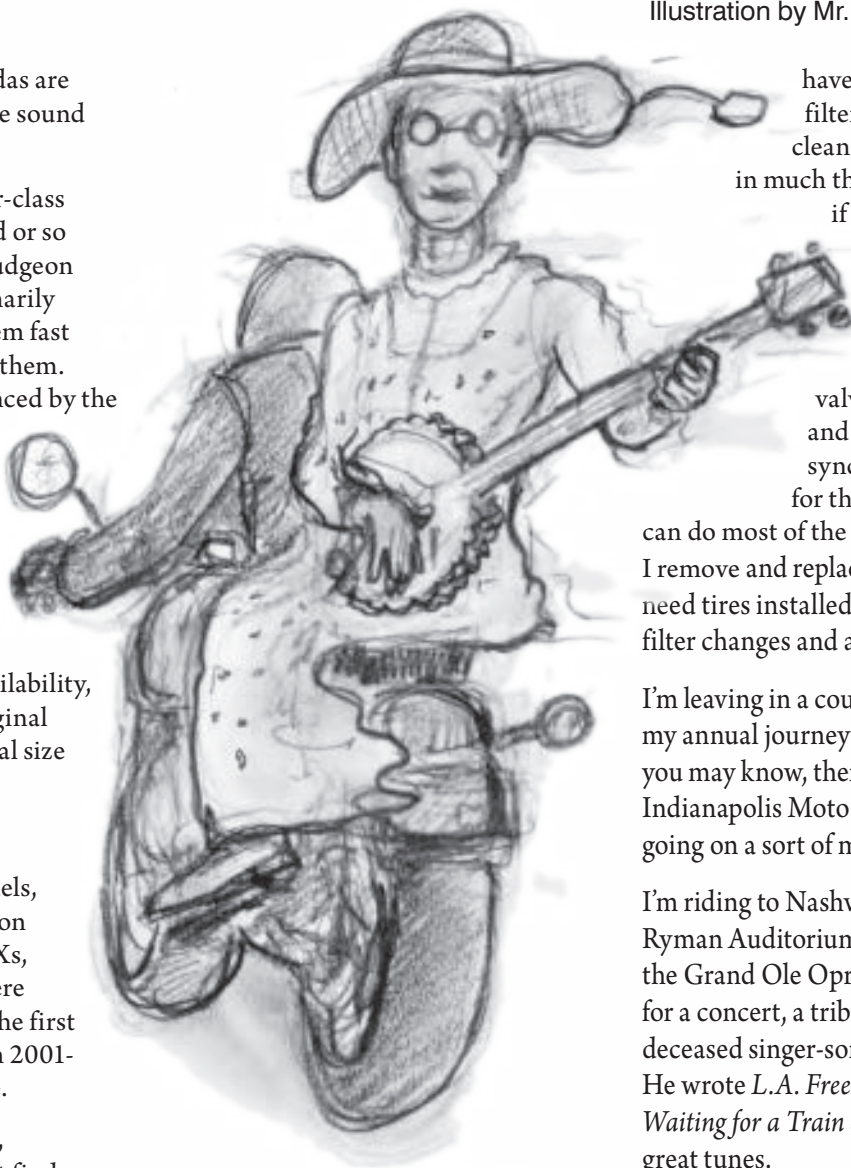
Singles and twins of the same vintage, '70s, '80s and '90s, have been snatched up by today's youth. The fours do not seem to represent that musty authenticity or cheap availability, so many survive, often with original seats and fenders, tires of original size and glossy factory paint.

Imagine.

Except for a few collectible models, those sweet old fours are common and relatively cheap to buy. ZRXs, the bikes I know most about, were sold between 1999 and 2005. The first two years they were 1100s, from 2001-2005 they were 1200s like mine.

For \$4,000 you can buy a lovely, unmodified example. You might find one locally or online. There is no "best" year and there were no "bad" years. There are certainly some bad bikes, bikes that have been sloppily rebuilt from wrecks or that have fallen over and run while on their sides, starving for oil. Those bikes are exceptions.

My bike did not have a caring original owner. He made several small modifications that could generously be described as "Mickey Mouse." He



have air boxes with capable filters so they breathe clean air. They were built in much the same form for years if not decades, so their teething problems were solved early on. They endure.

I've just had my valve clearances checked and my carburetors synchronized. Except for those two operations, I can do most of the maintenance myself. I remove and replace my wheels when I need tires installed. I do my own oil and filter changes and air filter changes.

I'm leaving in a couple of weeks for my annual journey to the Midwest. As you may know, there is no longer an Indianapolis MotoGP, so this year I'm going on a sort of music pilgrimage.

I'm riding to Nashville, Tennessee, to the Ryman Auditorium, the fabled venue for the Grand Ole Opry for decades. I'm going for a concert, a tribute to the recently deceased singer-songwriter Guy Clark. He wrote *L.A. Freeway* and *Desperadoes Waiting for a Train* among many other great tunes.

On the way to Nashville, I plan to visit a couple of places that have inspired songs, the Everly Brothers' Bowling Green ("... softest grass I've ever seen. A man in Kentucky sure is lucky... to lie down in Bowling Green.") and Paradise, Kentucky, made famous in the John Prine song by the same name.

"Daddy, won't you take me back to Muhlenberg County, down by the Green River where Paradise lay? I'm sorry my son, but you're too late in askin'. Mr. Peabody's coal train has hauled it away."

I've never been to the Ryman, never thought I'd get there. I'm going the only way that seems right—on a motorcycle. A trip by air or by car is somehow less real to me. I like to watch the old-road miles roll under my bike's wheels.

This trip, especially the Ryman visit, will be priceless to me. But thanks to Japanese willingness (a decade or two or three ago) to build sturdy, fast, reliable across-the-frame four-cylinder motorcycles, I can do it on a bike I can actually afford to own!

Maynard started a Facebook page for motorcyclists and road cyclists that use blood thinners, but have continued to ride despite the added danger. If you ride despite it all, please go to [facebook.com/WarfarinRangers](https://www.facebook.com/WarfarinRangers) and post something: a story or a photo. And be careful out there.



As my regular readers will know, I ride a Kawasaki ZRX, a 1200cc, across-the-frame four-cylinder motorcycle. My bike was new in '04, 12 years ago as I write this. The first owner rode it 7,000 miles and sold it... in 2011, as I recall.

Because the bike was given to me as a gift, I don't know how much it sold for in 2011. Maybe four thousand or forty-five hundred dollars. Not a lot of money.

It's just about to roll over 50,000 miles, 43,000 in my ownership. I've replaced a battery, two air filters, a few wheel bearings, two sets of fork seals and a set of fork bushings, chains and sprocket sets twice, instrument illumination bulbs, gallons of oil and a dozen oil filters. And tires—more tires than I care to remember.

Here's where I'm going: what used to be called Universal Japanese Motorcycles, or UJMs—chain-drive, five-speed, across-the-frame, double-overhead-cam fours, particularly the 1000s and 1100s—are an often ignored but dependable and spirited way to enjoy years of motorcycling.

My bike is water-cooled, but it is based on earlier, air-cooled Kawasakis called KZs and GPZs. They were produced in varying displacements for riders in developed countries around the world, riders hungry for powerful, smooth motorcycles. They sold by the thousands.

All the Japanese majors made them. My mechanic says he likes Kawasakis and Suzukis, but your mechanic might tell

was evidently not fastidious about maintenance, nor did he turn a hose on the bike after riding on roads sprayed with corrosive de-icing chemicals.

None of that is the bike's fault.

Because those UJMs have electronic ignition, their spark plugs always fire at the right time. They have ample oil capacity so they lubricate their engines generously. In unmodified form, they

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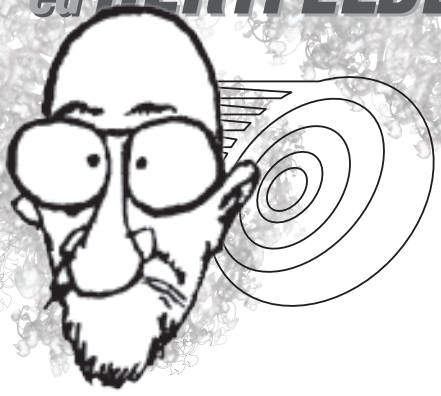


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# ed HERTFELDER RITES OF PASSAGE

Illustration by Mr. Jensen



pair of Argyll socks I'd been saving in case I ever lost my mind and took up golf.

Over by the firehouse, "Hot Clock" Henderson had drawn a crowd where he was dismembering a motorcycle and piling the pieces into a wheelbarrow.

You see, every year Henderson buys a new enduro bike and the first thing he does is remove the fenders, fuel tank, seat, handlebars and wheels. He then replaces these with anything that fits. So at the start of the enduro season he was mounted on a motorcycle made of parts he had borrowed from every rider he was acquainted with in the tri-state

repair spots it looked like a wart exhibit. He asked if I knew who owned the front fender he was holding. The thing had more mounting holes drilled in it than a radiator cover. I suggested it belonged to a South Jersey Enduro Riders member since those guys are still swapping parts from steam powered motorcycles.

In fact, the SJER club swaps complete motorcycles among themselves so often that there will come a time when a new member will be riding a motorcycle previously owned by *all* the other members. They have it planned so far in advance that the fellow getting the bike three years down the line will suggest his preference in brush guards to the fellow actually buying the thing.

I remember Jack Rainey breaking a fork leg clean off one time, and the next three guys in line for that bike feeling pretty bad about it.

Almost two years after I'd left that club, the fellow who'd inherited my Triumph called and said he needed the wiring diagram. I told him it had gotten wet and the ink had transferred somehow and the only way you could make sense of it was to hold it to a mirror.

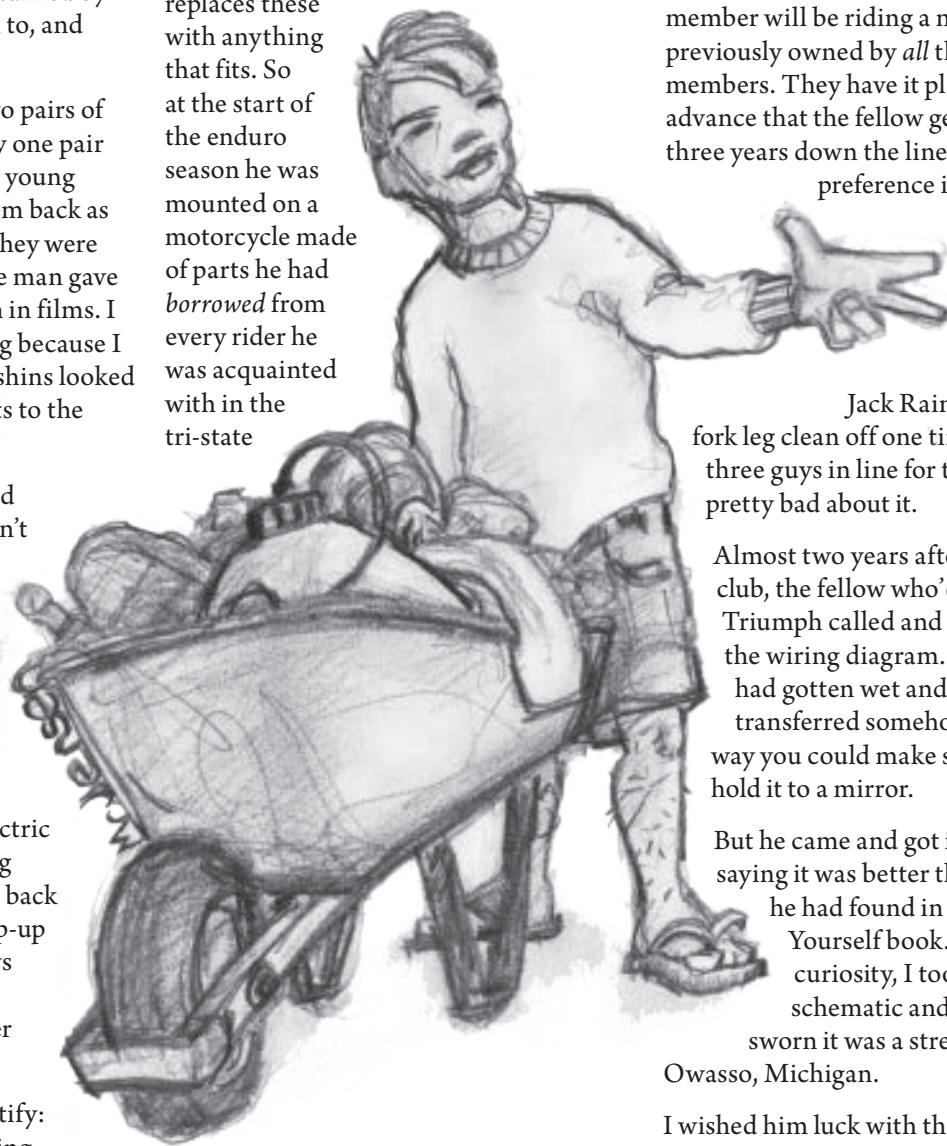
But he came and got it anyway, saying it was better than the diagram he had found in an old Fix-It-Yourself book. Just out of curiosity, I took a look at his schematic and would have sworn it was a street map of Owasso, Michigan.

I wished him luck with the Triumph and told him not to be too concerned with the wiring color codes because some of the previous owners of the thing were definitely colorblind. Not to mention that when I owned that bike the country was in one of those mini-depressions when I was out of work. When wiring had to be replaced, I used a lot of TV antenna wire that I had split up the middle with a razor blade.

Before I left the Stumpjumper, Mel Downs came by to repossess the aluminum loading ramp I'd borrowed from him because he'd left it lying in his backyard so long that saplings eight feet tall were growing through the holes in the thing.

The funny thing about the entire process was that I had never expected to get those knee pads back—what I *really* wanted back was my canteen.

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area and today was the best time to return them to their owners.

When Henderson trundled past with his wheelbarrow he returned my old fiberglass gas tank, the one with so many

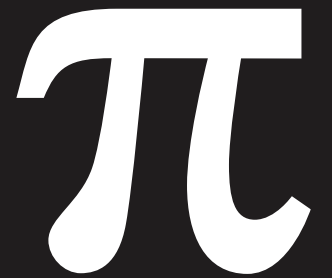
In most of the country, the last District enduro before winter slams the door, turns into a giant Swap Meet. After the Stumpjumper, the extra set of knee pads I thought I'd lost were returned by the young fellow I'd lent them to, and forgotten about, last April.

At the time, seeing as I had two pairs of knee and shin guards and only one pair of legs, I flipped one set to the young guy and told him I wanted them back as soon as he got steady work—they were good Hallmans that some nice man gave me after I asked if he had been in films. I didn't offer the pair I was using because I thought their blue dye on my shins looked very macho when I wore shorts to the trophy presentation.

Then Dan Sinkoff came by and returned something that I didn't even remember I'd lent him. Dan had a box full of those great Coleman double-mantle lamps—what we call a pump-up lamp to distinguish them from the bottle-gas propane type that rich people use. Seems a hurricane had downed the electric power in Dan's section of Long Island. When the power came back Dan had collected every pump-up he could find and didn't always ask for permission. After all, who would begrudge a disaster victim?

My Coleman was easy to identify: its mantles had gone west during the unbelievable vibration after one of my van's rear tires had decided to donate a section of its tread to the resurfacing project on Route 206. I had made two replacement mantles from the toes of a

## GREAT BEER!



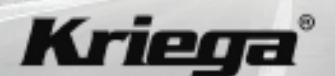
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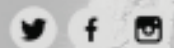
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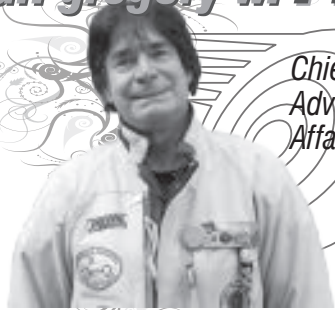


dr. gregory w. FRAZIER

# ADVENTURE RIDING UNTERHOSEN

Illustration by Mr. Jensen

Chief, World  
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The adventure motorcycle market has been expanding as motorcyclists cross over from what used to be called motorcycle touring to the more marketable *experience* of adventure riding. The Germans can of course be credited with the genesis of this creative adventure marketing ploy, badging heavyweight *motorrad* (motorcycle) pavement-pounders as dual-sport adventure riding machines.

An acquaintance recently made the transition from the Harley-Davidson club to the adventure riding clique, and immediately commenced planning for his first adventure ride from the Lower 48 to Alaska. He began last fall by purchasing a BMW GS Adventure, sucked into the dealer showroom after watching a television show and then joining an adventure riding internet forum. Armed with a healthy credit card and a 2,000 page German "Adventure Touring Accessories" catalog, he spent the winter adding farkle and bling to his new motorcycle, while picturing himself on his summer adv-journey to Alaska, a mini Long Way Round.

As he added weight and wind resistance to his motorcycle, he got caught up in the ADV image and decided his Harley-Davidson leather jacket, chaps and beanie helmet were unsuitable for being seen in public on his new adventure motorcycle. Like a hungry trout going for a fat worm on a fishing hook, he hammered his credit card, purchasing a vast array of adventure-marketed products.

The first item he ordered was an adventure riding suit which set him back nearly \$2,000, accepting the seller's claim that it would withstand an attack by an Alaska bear or moose in heat. Next was a pair of adventurous boots, waterproof and worth every one of the hundreds of dollars for the protection offered from the sole of his foot to just below his knees. He did admit the boots were "clunky," and not as comfortable for walking as were his Harley-Davidson lace-up riding boots, but justified the weight and awkwardness by saying, "I'll be adventure riding, and not adventure walking."

Caught-up in the frenzy of his increasingly adventurous purchasing, he bought a pair of gloves that were marketed as adventure riding gloves. To top off his outfit he dropped nearly another \$1,000 for a German helmet, also marketed as adventure riding-specific.

Surfing the internet, he found a variety of colored stickers sold in pairs that said ADV. He bought four, one for his new German helmet, two to affix to his also-German adventure panniers, and a spare.

A Sunday photo op test ride found his pictures from front, rear and sides in my email inbox Monday morning, with the question, "Do you think I'm ready for Alaska?"

I wrote back, "You're ready for the fooking cover of the German version of GQ magazine. What I can't see is, are wearing your *abenteuer unterhosen* (adventure underpants)?"

This question threw him a high speed, knee high, cranial curve ball and he went quiet for some weeks. I was just having him on, winding him up a bit. I did not know if there were in fact German adventure riding underpants.

Two weeks later Mr. German ADV-GQ Poster Boy reported he had bought adventure *unterhosen*, and that they were made of environmentally friendly bamboo.

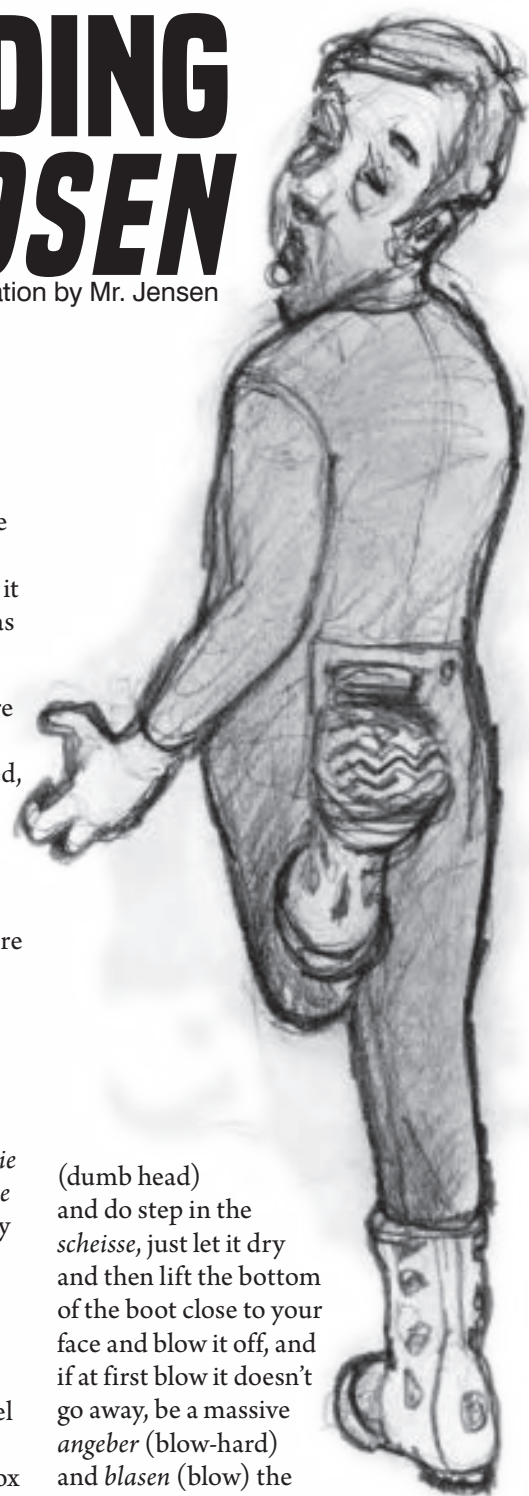
At this point in his adventure-prep mode I suggested he might consider paying to join a guided motorcycle tour in Alaska, it being his first time out of the Lower 48 as well as riding adventurously.

He snapped his reply like to an adventure God in the sky, with a stiff right arm held high, palm upward and open handed, while clicking his adventure riding boot heels together, saying, "I've not invested all this time and money to be a Muppet following some babysitter for a canned adventure. It must be so for real adventure riders!"

My reply was, "OK, the last two things you seemingly need are a *scheisse-stick* (shit stick) for cleaning the *scheisse* off the bottom of your boots if you step in some. In German slang they are called *die jordan scheisse-stick* and you carry it in *die pumphrey werkzeugkasten* (the pumphrey toolbox), a well-known, pretentious collector of *scheisse*."

After weeks of unsuccessful hunting for the tool and toolbox, he gave up and was ready to start for Alaska. He wrote, "I feel I've got the complete adventure riding package, except for the pumphrey toolbox and the *jordan scheisse-stick*. Do you think I'll miss them?"

"No," I replied, "you'll be having a real adventure ride. Just be careful where you step. Don't step in any dog, bear, moose or buffalo *scheisse*. However, if you are dumb enough to do so, being a full-on *dummkopf*



(dumb head) and do step in the *scheisse*, just let it dry and then lift the bottom of the boot close to your face and blow it off, and if at first blow it doesn't go away, be a massive *angeber* (blow-hard) and *blasen* (blow) the *jordan scheisse* away."

He wrote back, "Doc, you really get to the bottom of things don't you? Let me assure you I'll not be such a fookwit as to post anything on Facebook or the internet showing that I am a *dummkopf*."

I replied, "Good fellow, when you return from your Alaska adventure, drop me a note. And here is one final tip before you go, regarding your new *unterhosen*. They are not meant to be worn all the time on your adventure. Take them off and wash them using soap once in a while. They may be good German quality, but will collect and then waft some ripeness if not given a chance to wick away some of the odoriferous *jordan* and *pumphrey* stuff that collects in the seat part of your bamboo *unterhosen*."

When he wrote back, "*Jawohl, Herr Doktor, waschen meine abenteuer unterhosen!*" I saw he had gotten well into the German adventure riding niche.

Dr. Frazier's all-color coffee table book, *DOWN AND OUT IN PATAGONIA, KAMCHATKA AND TIMBUKTU*, available at [MototorBooks.com](http://MototorBooks.com), is the first-ever first-hand chronicle of a never-ending motorcycle ride by "the world's most cerebral motorcyclist," and is highly recommended by Grant Johnson of [HorizonsUnlimited.com](http://HorizonsUnlimited.com).



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sam **DEVINE**



Illustration by Sam Devine

# What Is A Biker?

The question invokes an infinite number of responses. Rider. Wanderer. Leather daddy. Beardo. Scumbag. Lowlife. Gang member. Drug runner. Brawler. Enforcer. Racist. Malcontent. Nomad. Club member. Free man (or woman). Loser. Loose cannon. Gearhead. Traveler. Motorcyclist. Racer. Scofflaw. Tough guy. Asshole. Drunkard. Mechanic. Tattooed, subversive intellectual.

The image of the Biker is almost as old as the motorbike and bleeds into other archetypes like fog over the coastal hills. Part cowboy, part warrior, part sad-eyed outsider, the Biker is a piece of motorcycling that cannot be denied. The Biker lives in our subconscious minds, ready for anything—quick to fight and fast to ride—a wraith of burning rubber and howling exhaust.

But from the get go, the Biker has been a fabrication. Voltaire said, “If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him.” And the Biker has been tooled and cast by our minds, every bit as much as seen and experienced by our eyes.

This fabricated image got its kickstart just after World War II.

There had certainly been bikers, or at least motorcyclists before the War, but this was the first time that motorcycling was more than just a handful of eccentric contraptionists. This was the first time a large group of men came home and had a chance to straddle a set of explosion chambers and gears to rocket down the streets of America.

This was also the first time there was an inordinate number of conflict-exposed individuals looking for an outlet for the intense feelings that stayed with them after combat. We called it shell-shocked, then. We called it battle fatigue later, and now we called it Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. A great number of these troubled young men sought to replace to the intensity they had felt at war, to find relief from the mundane life of civilian America.

Motorcycling answered that call. There were already clubs, but more sprang up. They rode and camped and shot and drank and fought and caused a general disturbance that was noteworthy but relatively manageable.

Then came the Hollister Riot. During the Fourth of July celebrations of 1947, there was an AMA sanctioned

event called the Gypsy Tour that attracted way more two-wheeled attendants than expected. The sleepy California agricultural town of Hollister saw a few small scuffles, which the press dramatized as debaucherous escapades. They described the “Havoc in Hollister” and showed the drunken biker astride his trusty steed.

Shortly after, a film was made that would touch the American psyche and cement the career of a young actor named Marlon Brando. In *The Wild One*, a group of rowdy hooligans rolls into a small town after a race and takes over the local sodee-pop joint. In a brief moment, Brando’s character forever alters the perception of motorcyclists. Leaning against a wall, a young lady asks him: “What are you rebelling against?” And he responds: “What have you got?”

While quoting *The Wild One* may seem like yesterday’s news, it’s important to remember that most people today have never seen the film, yet have a conception of the Biker that stretches back to it. They’re afraid to jostle even the smallest Honda cruiser because it might be attached to a massive brute lurking nearby, just waiting to respond with brass knuckles.

And like it or not, we benefit from the pervasive perception of the Biker as dangerous. Folks far and wide know not to touch a bike. They may have never met a rider or seen a truly *Wild One*, but most people assume that anyone with a leather jacket and two-wheeled transport is an outlaw that’s buried a corpse on the edge of town. Never mind the tennis racket strapped to that sissy bar.

But despite how we may benefit from the image now, its origin was a farce.

Sure, there were certainly a number of hardcore riders dishing it out to all comers. But that image of the drunken biker in Hollister—published in *Life* magazine—was supposedly staged. The photographer is said to have piled empty beer cans next to the bike and had a random drunk pose with the detritus.

the worst to avoid incrimination. *Easy Rider* showed us drug-running wanderers looking for good times and a new society on their way to New Orleans. And now *Sons of Anarchy* has taken the American living room into the biker clubhouse, espousing the most violent of the biker myths and truths.

The funniest part is how we’ve completed the myth. The fabricated Biker image has been wrapped in a thousand real incidents, and truth has become stranger than fiction. We, as a whole, create the Biker. We advocate him (or her) as a merciless, gun-toting, unapologetic road warrior

Since then, we’ve certainly run with the idea. Hunter S. Thompson wrote the seminal *Hells Angels* book—perhaps blowing things out of proportion, perhaps downplaying

atop a shining, chrome conveyance that screams into the sunset. Somewhere out there is a rider that fits every Biker stereotype and has never even heard of “Johnny” or the Hollister Riot. And somewhere else there’s a couch potato cowering in fear, who’s never met a real motorcyclist.

Despite all the media-driven misconceptions, being a Biker or Motorcyclist—or whatever you want to call it—still comes down to riding. You can pick apart every other piece of the image and the ride remains. Riding—and riding well—is perhaps the only part of the myth that they got right from the beginning. As Dinky says in the film: “You want to see something, you want to see Johnny go. He really goes. He really screws it on. Arrraaaaah!”

Look at Johnny go. *Sam is our SF-based columnist. He motorbikes, kitesurfs, and picks guitars. Get a copy of his book, “Fifty Rides,” at SamDevine.com. @*

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-CityBike Classifieds Editor

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# Locals Only: The HPT, By BMW Motorcycles Of San Francisco



By Surj Gish  
Photos by Surj Gish

We don't usually actually ride the bikes (or the people) we feature in *Locals Only*, back here in the dark recesses of the mag. That isn't really on purpose—at least the bikes part—but when BMWCSF (what the crew at BMWCSF asked us to call them, to keep them out of trouble with the mothership back in the fatherland—apparently there's already some other dealer, selling cars, no less, using SF BMW, pffft...) asked if we'd be interested in covering the HPT they created, we pushed our luck a bit: "Sure. Can we ride it?!"

They said yes. Trust me, I was just surprised as you.

Before we get to that ride, I should give the HPT a proper introduction. The bike is a BMWCSF in-house custom build based on BMW's R NineT—the result of a collaboration between Dealer Principal Eric Wight, General Manager Larry Saenz, and Shop Foreman Mario Lopez.

Here's how the conversation went as Markus and Larry bolted on a plate out in front of BMWCSF:

Markus: "So, don't crash this thing. These Diablo Supercorsas take a bit to warm up, so be careful."  
Me: "Gotcha. Just in case... how much will it cost me?"  
Markus: "For you... how about \$39,000?"  
Me: "Yeah, I'm not gonna crash this thing."

Eric had previously told me over email that while the HPT utilizes low clip-ons, it's

not so radical as to prevent being "properly ridden." I definitely experienced some RBSS (Random Bike Switching Syndrome) after hopping off my GS and nearly immediately riding away on the HPT, and the triangle created by the Rizoma clip-ons and Gilles rearsets is certainly sporty—but once I escaped the right angle stop-and-go grids of SOMA traffic and got to lean and turn the bike a bit more, I found the ergos to be wonderfully natural. The forward lean is not overly aggressive, and the placement of the pegs allows for easy movement on the bike. Very cool.



The Öhlins suspension feels taut and supple, like an Olympic tennis player's buttocks. On the bumpier-than-your-average-fire-road surface of 3rd Street, the HPT is spanking my ass like that same tennis player would if we were playing tennis, but on less neglected, more road-like pavement, the black and gold suspension bits do a fabulous job of keeping the rubber on the road—unless, of course, you're whacking the throttle like a lonely zookeeper teaching an unruly monkey a lesson via corporal punishment.

And you will want whack it. The engine's internals aren't modified, and external mods—aside from the exhaust—are subtle: the stock airbox and intake bits have

been replaced with an old school hot rod-looking RSD filter housing with a K&N filter feeding Mishimoto intake tubing; easy to miss if you're not looking. But the abbreviated exhaust sings pure rock 'n' roll, and the character of the R NineT's now "old timey" 1200 motor combined with the racy-but-natural riding position and the let's do this feel of the Öhlins spring-ings makes for a package that encourages spirited throttle application.

It's a real looker, too; an elegant, minimalist—but not overly so—



combination of black, blue, and exposed (well, clear-coated) aluminum, accented by a few tasteful carbon fiber bits. Creative touches like the scalloped points of aluminum verging into the black on the tank and the BMW Atlantis jacket-sourced seat fabric, combined with downright lovely paintwork and powder coating, make for a bike that catches your eye—not because it's radical-looking, but because it's just so damn fine.

According to Eric, the build team wanted to create "Something that people that really know bikes would look at and say, 'Oh man, I want to get down on the ground and look at it closely,' and not just something that smacks people in the head

with a sledgehammer." So while the modifications are extensive, down to essentially invisible details like the removal of no-longer-needed frame tabs, minimalist simplicity is the theme, and the resulting motorcycle looks just right. 🍌



# Tankslapper

## 'Stich Fest

You may recall last month's email from Patrick Moriarty on the perceived absence of *CityBikers* and *CityBike* readers in the photo collage on the cover of the most recent Aerostich catalog. Legendary 'Stich-



horse and longtime Chief of our World Adventure Affairs Desk, Doc. Frazier thought we ought to point that he too was on that cover, if in stealthier-than-usual fashion:

*Adventure gear guru Mr. Goldfine did sneak in a CityBike "staffer" picture on the cover of the new catalog, incognito. Knowing my camera shyness, he used instead a photograph*



Photo - Bjorn Nybo  
by John Christian Nygård - 2015

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*of the back of my old (R) and new (L) Hi Viz Darien Jackets, center, 2/3rds page down. I suspect he knew that was better than me atop two motorcycles, crossing a bridge while holding hands with myself.*

No word, however, on whether the Good Doctor will be joining us for our upcoming *Hands Across The Golden Gate* benefit ride.

## Literary Whut?

John from Mckinleyville emailed to invite us up his way for a ride, although he—strangely—mischaracterized our “curious writing styles” as “literary work.”

*I've been getting your literary work at the Black Lightning, in Eureka, for the last 6 months and really enjoy it. A collection of curious writing styles to say the least.*

*I live in Mckinleyville, just up the road from Eureka. I have been riding for 55 years, mostly 60's Brit stuff. Seems Mr. Gish enjoys some of my favorite roads (hwy 299, 3, & 36). A cautionary note: you may encounter such things as cavernous pot holes, vertical pavement separations larger than 6", large rocks, large bears and pot growers lusting*

*after your ride. The roads that Caltrans has forgotten.*

*Next time you are up this way, give us a holler and me and some friends will show you hwy 96, and the Forks of the Salmon.*



*Hwy 44 through Lassen Park is also a blower or The Deer Creek (hwy 32) up, out of Chico. I used to ride a 65 T-100SC from Susanville to Livermore every two weeks (still have the T-100). Another great ride.*

*P.S. The boys want you to bring Gwynne.*

Well, John, you may be in luck—we'll be heading up to hang around the Black Lightning (which we love!) for the Moto Envy show on September 10<sup>th</sup>. That we may or may not include Gwynne—but if you contribute to the *Get Gwynne A Zero* fund, you'll increase the chances of her bringing that infectious smile up your way.

## Gixxy Up

Josh, location undisclosed, wrote to ask about bringing his presumably fender-eliminated, open-piped Gixxer, bro, to the Lane Splitting State.

*I am moving to California in a few months. I have a 98 GSXR that is not stock (non-DOT headlights & aftermarket exhaust). Do you have any ideas where to go to get good information on if it's worth it to try importing it or just sell it & buy a new one?*

First, Josh, we apologize for immediately mocking your bike, bro. That's not a very nice way to welcome you to the best moto-state in The Union.

Second, this is an area we are admittedly not that familiar with, what with already living here. There are some mileage requirements for bringing vehicles that were not originally manufactured to meet California emission standards—basically, the vehicle has to have at least 7,500 miles on it or you can't register it. But we're not sure if that applies to moving here, as opposed to living here and buying a vehicle from another state. But certainly that 18 year old Gixxer has more than 7,500 miles on it, right?

Anyway, check out [dmv.ca.gov](http://dmv.ca.gov) for better information than we're providing, and if you get frustrated by the non-answers there, give the DMV a call and talk to someone. Be warned, though—DMV employees can be as inconsistently informed as *CityBikers*.

## How To Not Get Published In CityBike

We get lots of communication from lots of people who—for some reason—want

to be published here in these hallowed pages. Sometimes people are reasonable and thoughtful in their “hey, check out my story” emails, and other times, we get, well, shit like this voicemail:

*Yeah, I'm not an online kinda guy. I got an '82 GS650, though you might be interested, I dunno... I rode it from New York to Tierra Del Fuego. Just got back, I'm in some little fuckin' hippie town, Fairfax, California... I don't know if you want to pay me for an article to write about this shit, or send someone out here to write this, or if you even give a shit. I haven't seen your article in years. It's a great mag, rag, whatever you want to call it. Shit, if you'll pay me for my story, man, I'll put all kinds of shit in there that didn't happen. How 'bout that?*

Admittedly, this dude sounds a little like he might already write for *CityBike*, but we're also a little put off by his “fuck you,



pay me” tactics, and as a result of said put off-ness, we're going to mock this potential contributor rather than respond. Like so:

Look man, thanks for the sorta-kind words. We're not really online kinda guys and gals either, but since riding through South America has become the default bullshit *finding yourself* vision quest, it ain't all that interesting or unique, certainly not interesting or unique enough for us to send someone out to interview you for a story about your wannabe moto-adventure celebrity ass. In other words, we *don't* give a shit. 🙄

## Send Us Your Stuff



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Two of Terry Otton's Triumphs: a real-deal, old-style Triumph flat tracker with custom Trackmaster frame, newly built by Eddie Mulder; and a modern Bonnie-based street tracker, photographed at Ramspur Winery.

Photo: Jeff Ebner



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