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On The Cover:

Dino-mite! The Gold Wing is nearly big enough to accommodate this Oregon T-Rex, if only his arms weren't so short.
Photo: Surj Gish

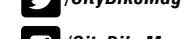
Contents:

- NCR. 3
- Shop Rag 5
- Pit Stops 6
- New Stuff 7
- Uneasy Rider 7
- Farnam's Four 10
- Shapely Heads 11
- Events 12
- Hello Darkness 13
- AFM Round 5 Program 16
- Gold Wang 18
- The 'Stogie 22
- Maynard 24
- Hertfelder 25
- Doc Frazier 26
- Devine 27
- Classifieds 28
- Locals Only 29
- Wingslapper 30
- Last Page Photo 31
- Million Reasons (To Ride A Gold Wing) . . . 33

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Contact CityBike:
PO Box 18738
Oakland CA 94619
Phone: 415.282.2790

Editorial: editor@citybike.com
Advertising / Business: rftc@citybike.com

CityBike Staff:
Editor in Chief & Jackass of All Trades: Surj Gish
Master of Puppets & Layout: Angelica Rubalcaba
Senior Editor: Robert Stokstad

Chief of the World Adventure Affairs Desk:
Dr. Gregory Frazier
Staff Photographers: Robert Stokstad,
Angelica Rubalcaba, Max Klein

Artwork: Mr. Jensen, Sam Devine

Operations: Gwynne Fitzsimmons

Road Scholars:
Sam Devine, An DeYoung, Jeff Ebner, Fish,
Max Klein

Contributors:
Michele Appel, Dan Baizer, Craig Bessenger, J. Brandon, Blaise Descollonges, Julian Farnam, Alonzo Fumar, Will Guyan, Brian Halton, David Hough, Maynard Hershon, Ed Hertfelder, Otto Hofmann, John Joss, Bill Klein, David Lander, Lucien Lewis, Larry Orlick, TJ Noto, Courtney Olive, Jason Potts, Bob Pushwa, Gary Rather, Charlie Rauseo, Curt Relick, Mike Solis, Ivan Thelin, James Thurber.

Alumni (RIP):
John D'India, Joe Glydon, Gary Jaehne, Adam Wade

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CityBike is published on or about the third Monday of each month. Editorial deadline is the 1st of each month. Advertising information is available on request. Unsolicited articles and photographs are always welcome. Please include a full name, address and phone number with all submissions. We reserve the right to edit manuscripts or use them to wipe our large, fragrant bottoms.

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News, Clues & Rumors

Our Latest Weird T-Shirt Contest

Please note—that's *weird*, not wet. Not that we'll reject the hilarity that will certainly accompany photos of bearded, "Whattya mean I look like a bear?" bikers dowsing themselves with a garden hose while making their best kissy-face, but it's really just weird, not wet.

To wit: there are at least two Lady Gaga references in this issue. Might be more—we sometimes get our Gaga going without realizing it. The first reader to send both of 'em to rftc@citybike.com gets a free CityBike t-shirt.

We'll pre-wet your t-shirt if you like.

Selective Life-Saving At The Push Of A Button

We're pretty big Ford fans here at CityBike—most of us haul our motos (and mags) in vans and trucks sporting the blue oval, the way God intended. Why? Because Ford's innovation, design and engineering are the best. Duh.

Here's the latest example of Ford-forward thinking: the 2018 Mustang GT will come with a Quiet Start mode, to let drivers wake their ponies without waking the neighbors. This is the electronic equivalent of Editor Surj pushing his old Ducati 900SS down the block before starting it (when it runs, of course) to wake up someone else's



Photo: Surj Gish

In our recent travels, we came upon many of these high profile billboards and other "state propaganda" in and around Salt Lake City, thanks to Utah's Department of Public Safety's Ride To Live program. Each billboard featured a different bike and rider, from cruisers to tourers to sportbikes.

It's a stark comparison to California, where compared to Utah, we have more than ten times the number of motorcyclists (2015 registration data) and over thirteen times the number of motorcycle fatalities (2015 GHSA data). Yet we're lucky to get occasional "Look Twice" Lite-Brite sign action, and state-level MROs are busy quibbling about profiling instead of efforts to actually keep motorcyclists alive.

prevent distraction while driving. iOS is the operating system used on Apple iPhone, and if you need more information than that, you're going to have to Google it, because we don't have space to bring you up to speed on the last decade of technological advancements. Google is a search engine, by the way. Search engines are... never mind.

Word on the digital streets is that the phone's accelerometer will detect vehicle acceleration and turn on DNDWD to mute incoming calls, text, and notifications, which based on driver behavioral data observed as we split by, drivers will perceive as the removal of oxygen from their vehicles. Assuming this doesn't result in a new dumb behavior, in which drivers spontaneously slam on their brakes, "just for a second," so they can send a quick "really important" text, this may make public roads safer by forcing drivers to pay attention to driving, because they'll have nothing else to do.

Since Drivers Won't Help Themselves

Apple's iOS 11 will include a Do Not Disturb While Driving setting to help

neighbors, instead of his own. Way lower effort—nice.

Imagine if motorcycles had such revolutionary technology. You'd be able to enjoy a cup of coffee without the *Douche-isti* that's been conspicuously posted next to his Panigale for the last ten minutes rattling your fillings and triggering your tinnitus when he gets frustrated by everyone's lack of attention to his carefully mussed hair, expensive sunglasses and Italian motorcycle and (finally) roars away, his Termignonis screaming like a petulant, vociferous



Photo: Surj Gish

Also, assuming some of the "it's all about control" crowd has progressed to using smartphones and know what any of this means, we'll point out that DNDWD is an optional feature, so as with so much of the stuff y'all cry about, the control is actually still yours.

Doc Frazier: Searching For The Lost Man

Doc Frazier, Chief of CityBike's World Adventure Affairs Desk, six-time 'round-the-world moto-traveler and occasional



Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba



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counselor to scared bunny rabbits, has begun research on his next literary adventure, titled *The Lost Man - Motorcycle Traveling The World With A 21st Century Ugly American*.

The good doctor told our bad editor, "It's at the edge of moto-journalism, with working chapter titles like "The Adventure Wifi Masturbator: Gotta Have An Internet Connection In My Motel Room Or I'm Not Staying Here, And I'm Not Sharing A Bathroom."

April 2017). We stopped by Carnegie again in early August to enjoy the pleasantly mild weather, check on the trees, and ride dirtbikes. Mostly ride dirtbikes.

One of the rangers told us that they've had to give 'em more water than they'd hoped, but that most of the li'l tree-lets are holding fast so far. As evidenced in this photo, there's more green in the scorched, dusty wasteland that is Carnegie in the summer than there was pre-tree party.

Sexting With Your MOMA

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (in collaboration with Skynet) has created an "artbot," officially named SendMe SFMOMA, to help bring some of their 34,000+ pieces of art to the masses (and capture data that can later be used to terminate humanity more efficiently). It's elegantly simple—just choose a topic, like pants, and text "send

me pants" to 572-51. You'll get a piece of art from the SFMOMA's collection, along with information about the piece.

SendMe, whose code name is presumably ArT-1000, was "conceived as a way to bring transparency to the collection while engendering further exploration and discussion among users."

Side note: if you actually need pants, and for some reason can't go grab a pair yourself, SFMOMA can't help you.

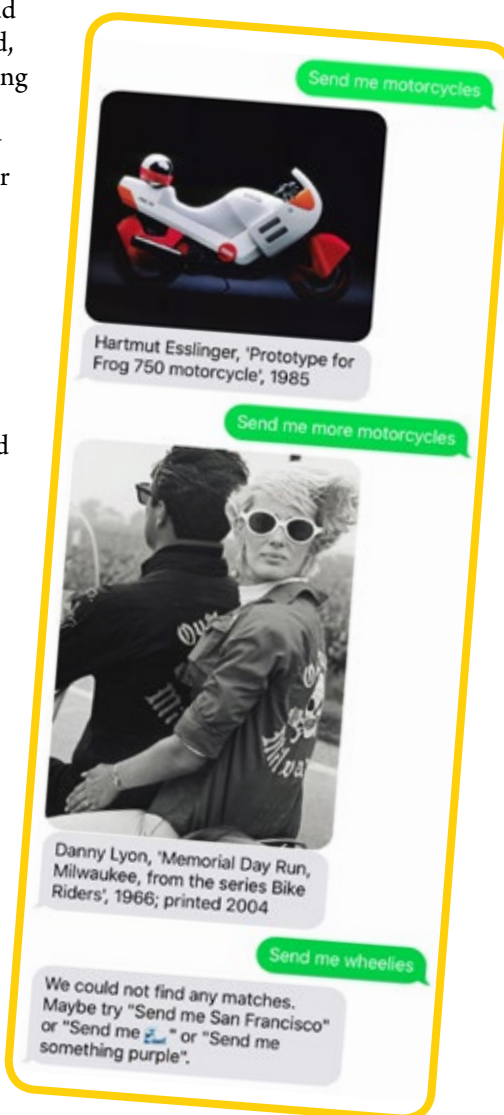


Photo: Surj Gish

A free taste can be found in posts at RTWMotorcycleAdventureRally.blogspot.com.

The Aspiring Ents Of Carnegie

Earlier this year, some of the *CityBike* Wrecking Crew went out to Carnegie SVRA to plant trees with other do-gooding moto-arboriculturists ("Putting Down Roots At Carnegie SVRA" - Pit Stops,



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What the hell does this artbot / Terminator have to do with motorcycles, you ask, with the frustration that can only come from attempting to read a magazine that purports to be about motorcycles, only to be greeted with fine art. San Francisco fine art, even.

Our more learned, creative readers will already have answered that question by texting "send me motorcycles" to the ArT-1000. That's what we did. It even works with iOS's little hipster café racer emoticon—that got us Andy Warhol's *Silver Marlon*.

Warning: if you're stuck at home with no pants on, "send me boobs" won't get you anything. You're gonna have to get more

creative to get SFMOMA artsy Terminator to send you even the most innocuous porn, unless it's moto-porn you're looking for.

Co-Branding Will Save The Motorcycle Industry

In an exemplary display of understanding what the market wants, second only to Ducati's Scrambler-shaped latte ads on Facebook, Harley-Davidson, recently the subject of much armchair quarterbacking and speculation by people who actually *shouldn't* know better because they don't know jack shit about the industry, has launched a co-branded clothing line to honor "this century's most anticipated and celebrated tour," which is surprisingly not the upcoming Propagandhi tour, but rather the Guns N' Roses "Not In This Lifetime" tour, which is totally about rock 'n' roll true believers coming together to make powerful music, *not* about Axl and Slash pretending to want to bury the hatchet somewhere other than each other's faces in the name of cashing in before they're too old to rock with some semblance of uh... whatever they had back in the day.

This'll surely get those pesky, tricky millennials buying Harley-Davidsons. Nothing piques the interest of those damn kids like glorifying the spectacle and excess of has-been old-timers cashing in on nostalgia and hazy cocaine memories while they still can.

Motorcycle Clubs Are Not A Protected Class

The Motorcycle Profiling Project, an organization dedicated to grassroots efforts to pass legislation addressing profiling and discrimination against motorcyclists (MotorcycleProfilingProject.com), reported in July that the Mercer County chapter of ABATE of Pennsylvania had turned its back on motorcycle clubs, claiming, "ABATE is supposed to stand for the ideals of motorcycle rights, including freedom of expression and association." Why? Because Mercer County ABATE included the words "No Colors" on an event flyer.

You may be familiar with ABATE—we write about, and work with, ABATE of California (abate.org) now and again, even if we don't see eye to eye on a lot of things. ABATE's activities vary from state to state—in California, the acronym represents "American Brotherhood Aimed Toward Education," and the organization is mostly concerned with the "rights" of capital B Bikers. ABATE of California employs a lobbyist on its behalf, but has struggled to maintain meaningful membership numbers and involvement.

In Pennsylvania, ABATE stands for "Alliance of Bikers Aimed Toward Education," and their mission statement is, "An Alliance of Bikers dedicated to the protection of the individual rights of motorcyclists through political change, charitable works, and public education." (abatepa.org)

Every state chapter tells a different version of the history of ABATE, but a key point here is that the acronym originally stood for "A Brotherhood Against Totalitarian Enactments" and ABATE's main focus

was fighting legislation targeted at bikers. ABATE of California, for example, has long used the slogan "Education Not Legislation."

Back to the MPP's take on Mercer County ABATE's "No Colors" event policy. We're officially calling bullshit on this crybaby victim-mentality nonsense, the "Poor me, I'm being picked on for being a biker," bawling.

We dislike being hassled for no reason as much as the next rugged individual, but as far as we can tell it's not motorcyclists that are being profiled, it's motorcycle clubs.

And in spite of all the hand-wringing and teeth-gnashing about "our lifestyle being threatened," it's important to note that the MCs getting jackbooted by The Man or eighty-sixed by their former favorite brewpub aren't on the receiving end of that stick, imagined or real, because of their motorcyclism. It's the club aspect that draws attention.

We'll repeat for emphasis: it's clubs that are being profiled, not motorcyclists.

Let's revisit ABATE of PA's mission statement, which focuses on the "individual rights of motorcyclists." No mention of clubs, see?

Never mind that in an abstract sense, you cannot simultaneously dress up in the trappings of badassery and then cry foul when people focus on the bad part of your ass. It's disappointing to see supposed freedom fighters, those that used to employ slogans like "education not legislation," some of whom pulled out that old "no new laws" standby as their sole reason for opposing a law codifying lane splitting, disingenuously pushing for new laws to prohibit the supposedly widespread problem of motorcyclist profiling.

While motorcyclists may occasionally encounter someone who doesn't like motorcycles, or beards, or tattoos, or maybe just stupid-loud pipes, they don't experience systematic profiling. What motorcyclists experience is something that sociologists refer to as "people being dicks."

Profiling happens to clubs, when it happens. But neither clubs, nor




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motorcyclists, are a protected class under the rule of law, nor should they be.

We reject the notion of pursuing legislation on this matter; as they say, "existing laws are enough." We also reject the notion that club profiling is an issue of concern to motorcyclists at large—it's not. It's an issue for organizations that identify themselves with patches and colors and insignia, whether those organizations are built around the motorcycling or scrapbooking lifestyle.

Motorcyclists, us included, use the word "rights" to apply to the concept of motorcyclist advocacy, as if the "motorcyclists' rights" we stand up for are on the same plane as the self-evident human rights. The "right" to wear patches on your vest, often dubiously characterized as "free speech" in an obvious end run toward legitimacy, isn't the same as human rights-level concepts such as the right to not be harassed because one is gay or straight, adheres to a particular faith, or was born a certain color.

We're not oblivious to the ways of The Man, from surveillance to outright harassment, but saying inane shit like "cops are the biggest gang in the world," as if

it's anything more than a catchy slogan is meaningless, and *CityBike* will no longer toe the line on this "issue" because "we're all motorcyclists."

We're not. Some of us are motorcyclists, and some of y'all are groupthink-controlled motorcycle owners that need patches and club rules to define your identity.

Motorcyclists and clubs are not mutually exclusive groups. The SFMC, the OMC, even the notorious East Bay Rats... motorcyclists *and* clubs. Notably, we haven't seen any of them tearing up about how the man gave 'em an unwarranted bad time.

Hell, some of us here at *CityBike* go out of our way to make trouble for ourselves on a near-daily basis. We take our licks when we get 'em, but The Man mostly turns a blind eye, and we've yet to encounter an establishment that wouldn't gladly accept our hard-earned cash. Maybe it's the responsible-looking high-vis gear, or maybe it's that *motorcyclist* profiling just isn't real.

If we're wrong, and there's evidence of wholesale harassment of innocent *motorcyclists*, not motorcycle clubs, that we've somehow continually missed, whether by law enforcement or businesses or whoever else is supposedly blowing out the tender, vulnerable flame of motorcycling's freedom candle, the full fire and fury of *CityBike's* editorial voice and considerable coffers will be brought to the fight. The former, anyway.

But since that's not the case, we ask the vest-wearing bellyachers to suck it up and move on like grownups. If the shitty bar you want to drink beers at midway through your poker run doesn't allow "colors" any more, go spend your money at some other shitty bar. It's not that hard.

Shop Rag

Johnson Leathers: Fire Damage, Still Open

San Francisco's long-running custom leather shop, Johnson Leathers, suffered fire damage on July 14th. Fortunately, the shop itself didn't burn, but the apartments above the shop did, meaning Johnson Leather sustained extensive smoke and water damage as a result. Significant amounts of inventory, equipment, and even customer garments being worked on were damaged or destroyed.

The shop will be open limited hours while the Johnson crew cleans up the mess and begins the process of rebuilding. For now, that means 11 AM to 3 PM, Monday through Saturday, but they'll expand those hours as soon as possible. We'll keep you posted here in Shop Rag as we learn more, or check JohnsonLeather.com for updates.

LG Moto: LG Motus

Lawrence Giardina, the LG in LG Moto, long known for his genial smile and outstanding reputation as a trusted British and European moto-mechanic, has added another marque to his roster, which already includes BMW, Ducati, Triumph, MV Agusta, Moto Guzzi, Husqvarna and KTM.

That new marque is Motus, meaning that Lawrence is now your smiling, certified mechanic friend for British, European, and *American* motorcycles.

Lawrence told us that he's been a fan of the Motus platform since the beginning, and talked to Motus founders Lee Conn

and Brian Case when they did an event at Piston & Chain. Recently, circumstances aligned: "I've got a regular customer who picked up an MSTR and asked if I would work on it. He mentioned something to the guys at Motus, who are infinitely accessible and helpful, and so I got scheduled up for a service school."

Check out LGMotoPerformance.com for more info.

San Jose BMW: Baggers For Bagging

BMW's new black bagger, the K1600B, is causing some stir, and perhaps a bit of confusion. We're heard a lot of good things, but haven't ridden one yet. That may change soon, as San Jose BMW has informed us that they not only have Big Bs in stock, they also have a demo unit available for test rides.

You know what that means: stay tuned for photos of an Aerostich-clad mystery rider doing Beemer bagger burnouts in front of the Pink Poodle.

Book your test ride at sjbmw.com, but don't tell 'em about our plans to roast the rear of that thing.

Hey! If you're a local shop and have news to share with the Bay Area riding community, shoot us a note at editor@citybike.com. And don't forget, we offer free help wanted ads for all local moto-businesses!

PITSTOPS

Risa Rides The ADV Woman Rally

By Risa Strobel

It's a hot night in Salida, Colorado, and I'm sitting on the porch of a Polish dirtbiker named Piotrek. I've not met him, and, though I'll be sleeping in his spare room, I won't meet him—he's not back home until late tomorrow. We have a mutual friend in Magda, who I met only three days ago. Piotrek gladly gave me his address and the location of his spare key,

and invited me to make myself at home, all on her say-so.

This is the kind of connection the ADVWoman Rally (ADVWoman.com) facilitates. Kris in PDX and I are planning rides in both our hometowns, and others further afield. Birte is the local dual-sport buddy I've been seeking for years. Alisa

wants me to come play in the SoCal desert with her, and also runs women's motorcycle tours all over the world! (WomensMotorcycleTours.com) Emma



Risa just loves working on that DRZ, especially trailside.

They're all excited to share their love of riding.

The range classes I took, Dirtbike Essentials and Adventure Essentials, were geared toward novice riders, but the instructors definitely took the experience level of each group of riders into the pacing and structure of each session. We did a lot of work on balance and slow speed control—drills I'm still doing at home. While some took to the skills easier than others, every pass from every woman was greeted

wants to travel from the UK and join me for part of my Eastern Europe road trip next summer.

These are just five of the dozens of amazing women I met at ADVWoman. Some have been riding for decades, others mere weeks: one woman showed up with a TW200 with 50 miles on it—all the miles she'd ever ridden! We all walked away better riders, with a deeper connection to this community of amazing gals.

Pat Jacques, the ADVWoman, begins each day's classes with these words: "I want you to be courageous Don't be afraid to

by encouragement, not just from the instructors, but from the students as well.

I've never been in such a supportive learning environment. Looking around the range at the end of the day, it was easy to see improvement in everyone, from the FNGs to the women who'd been riding for decades.

The afternoons were filled with classroom sessions: How to Fix a Flat Tire, GPS Navigation, First Aid, Trailside Maintenance, and more—again, all taught by women. How to Pick up Your Bike was a particularly popular class, and watching 5-foot tall, 120 pound women realize that they are perfectly capable of picking up an R1200GS is pretty empowering. When some students expressed disappointment at missing one class due to conflicts, an instructor even agreed to repeat her class the next morning!

The nights were pretty mellow: soaking in the hotel hot tub to work out the aches of the day's riding, conversation around the campground host's fire pit, maybe enjoying a beer or two in the hotel bar, laughing and making friends with other women riders. But there wasn't the wild partying that I've experienced at other motorcycle gatherings—these gals were there to ride.

And ride we did! The Granby, Colorado, area where the rally is based is chock-full of enjoyable trails, and the rally road book mapped out a few rides. They were all fairly easy, though I've heard that some

push yourself, to try unfamiliar things." All weekend, this is the sort of enthusiasm and encouragement radiates off Pat and her all-women team of instructors.



Photo: Risa Strobel

more challenging routes are in the works for next year. On Saturday I led a group of five on a ride that patched together three different routes, and took us through some stunning mountain scenery. All day

we kept crossing paths with other groups from the rally. I could spend weeks exploring this area and barely scratch the surface.

When I first mentioned this trip to my friends, I was uncertain: "It'll either be super cool, or a huge bummer."

It was cool beyond my wildest expectations.

ADVWoman is put on by a small group, maybe a dozen women, but they all put their

entire hearts into it. These monumental efforts have built something really special, something I recall fondly every day, something I look forward to returning to, something where women of all ages can come together to connect and just ride.



Photo: Max Klein

NEW STUFF

For When The Probable Occurs: Giant Loop's Possibilities Pouch

By Gwynne Fitzsimmons

I remember sitting in Baja with a flat tire, digging through my luggage to the very bottom of hell, looking for the pouch with tubes. Once my tire was repaired, I had to repack everything before I could get underway again. I thought then: what I need is an *oh shit* bag, a small bag that lives outside my luggage that holds a few basic tools and a tube. How much less stressful and timely if I had had my tube, powder, tire irons and wrenches all easily accessible? Truth be told, I'd started that trip with a fender pouch but after miles of

Bay Area often tell similar stories of "nice people everywhere." Almost without exception, I'm charmed and refreshed by my interactions with Americans of all stripes, every time I get out of The Bay.

If you're preemptively firing up a rant about how that's my white privilege speaking and I should check it, check yourself and ease off the kneejerk canned responses for a minute, by all means, plant your head in the sand and write that oh-so-thoughtful email, as if ignoring the catch-all unpleasantry of "politics" is actually an intelligent plan. *Motorräder Über Alles*, bro.

If you're still with me, here's the good news: riding your motorcycle more will help solve America's problems, at least the ones caused by us-versus-them divisiveness.

This is a real solution, not like the time I proposed a crowdfunding campaign to pay for me to ride to Southern California more frequently to solve the drought, back when it seemed the skies would only open up when I'd ride south of Gilroy.

Talk to any inclusive thought leader in one of the larger cities, and you'll likely hear about how the dum-dums in the less woke parts of the countries don't get it. Talk to any righteously indignant small-towner, and you'll get the opposite of that story: them big city folk don't understand how hard it is out here. Dumb it down to blue versus red states if you like, although that's part of the problem and also inaccurate.

That's the nice version: you'll often get a more hostile, hateful take, the speaker secure in their position on the high road while clearly not recognizing their own ignorant hypocrisy, the plank in their own eye.

But those of us who've ridden or otherwise traveled beyond the comfortable, intellectually-reassuring

Remember how I said most of us are pretty ok? The ones that aren't are a pretty small percentage. Yes, you might encounter someone that doesn't treat women as equals, or hates LGBTQXYZeveryotherletterapparently, and you might even discover a real live Racist in its natural habitat. You might run into someone who's just having a bad day, and some people are just equal opportunity jerks. I didn't say walking the walk would be easy, and some folks aren't gonna be open to discussion.

But we were all *born this way*, whatever way that is, and I think you'll mostly find good people with similar levels of unease when encountering The Other: new, different people. A good way to address that is for more Americans to see more of America and other Americans, to put in the work of interacting with each other more, even if it's sometimes uncomfortable or alienating.

Like I said, it's a real solution, but it's a small-steps solution, requiring a whole lot of us to start a-walking. Or riding, in this case. So get on your motorcycle and ride cross-country in the name of peace, love, and the American way! ☺

UNEASY RIDER WITH SURJ GISH

The Path To Righteousness Is A Motorcycle, A Map, And An Open Mind

I just returned from eleven days on the road in Big Vancy, *CityBike's* mags 'n' motos-hauling Transit 250. The point of the trip was to go riding in Colorado with legendary adventurer and longtime *CityBike* columnist Doc Frazier, to spend some time *away*. Away from work, away from deadlines, away from the day-to-day. Just me and Angelica on the road together, breathing, riding, living. It didn't quite work out that way, but I'll definitely tell you more about the riding next month.

It was a phenomenal trip, but it was also impossible to ignore context and current events. The state of the nation has weighed heavily on my mind in recent months, and I don't mean in the oversimplified "my side good, your side bad" way that seems to unavoidably shape public discourse today.

My punk rock roots go deep, deeper than my motorcycling roots even. I remember the lyrics of early punk music, concerned with racism, even Nazis, and the fear of nuclear war—a real fear back then. I remember thinking as I aged that those lyrics were becoming less relevant, that young punks coming up, learning of these old-timey punk bands via music streaming services wouldn't understand the unbridled rage, the societal background, the vitality and meaning of this music. Racism didn't disappear, to be sure, but it felt to me—to many—like we'd made significant progress, fought it back to some extent, so it was afraid to show its face, unhooded, in polite society. Nazis? Driven underground, barely a thing. Nuclear war? The stuff of comedy skits.

And yet, there I was in the van, pondering the surreality of Neo-Nazis marching in the streets, racists unafraid of being caught on camera as if their hateful stupidity was *just fine*, and our President alternating between dog whistle approval of this base backwardness and apocalyptic posturing toward North Korea, a country that seems to be working diligently to join the "we can end the world with our nukes too" club.

I think a lot of our country's problems can be solved by simply getting out of our



Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba

comfort zones: urbanites traveling to the "flyover states" instead of just flying over them on the way to carefully curated experiential vacations, rural residents visiting cities now and then, instead of acting like "A Country Boy Can Survive" is a fact-based cautionary tale. Every time I'm on the road, I spin my gears on how the way we think about ourselves, our fellow Americans, is so inaccurate, so prejudiced. Yeah, we're all very different—but almost all of us are pretty ok, too.

This latest shit... man, we got issues, issues that make DJ's "Falling Out" seem like a quaint nursery rhyme, and the Dead Kennedys' "Gone With My Wind" a chilling prediction.

If you're about to abandon reading this to compose an "I'm tired of politics, stick to motorcycling" email, let me tell you that there's good news, topical to bikes even. If you're still not on board, by all means, plant your head in the sand and write that oh-so-thoughtful email, as if ignoring the catch-all unpleasantry of "politics" is actually an intelligent plan. *Motorräder Über Alles*, bro.

If you're still with me, here's the good news: riding your motorcycle more will help solve America's problems, at least the ones caused by us-versus-them divisiveness.

This is a real solution, not like the time I proposed a crowdfunding campaign to pay for me to ride to Southern California more frequently to solve the drought, back when it seemed the skies would only open up when I'd ride south of Gilroy.

Talk to any inclusive thought leader in one of the larger cities, and you'll likely hear about how the dum-dums in the less woke parts of the countries don't get it. Talk to any righteously indignant small-towner, and you'll get the opposite of that story: them big city folk don't understand how hard it is out here. Dumb it down to blue versus red states if you like, although that's part of the problem and also inaccurate.

That's the nice version: you'll often get a more hostile, hateful take, the speaker secure in their position on the high road while clearly not recognizing their own ignorant hypocrisy, the plank in their own eye.

But those of us who've ridden or otherwise traveled beyond the comfortable, intellectually-reassuring

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tire irons and a sandwich. I personally like that this little bag is not bouncing around on the front fender, although Giant Loop does also make a version specifically for front fender placement. I also like that if I need to access whatever I might need from my *oh shit*, oops, I mean Possibilities Pouch, I simply unsnap the two beefy buckles and unroll the pouch to get what I need. When I'm finished, it's a quick roll and snap-snap and I'm on my way. There's no need to remove the bag to access its contents, eliminating any possible *oh shit* screw-ups in which your spare tube and irons end up flung somewhere along the trail, which is definitely not where you want them if you get a flat.



Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba

first modular helmet to receive a 5 star rating in British SHARP testing, it also boasts DOT certification in both open and closed positions.

How do they do that? Well, the chin bar moves separately from the face shield, meaning you have a genuine 3/4 helmet with the chin bar rotated back. When you decide your face is headed for a higher risk situation, flip the chin bar forward and it acts like a standard full face.

The styling is understated, and riding in the open or closed positions leaves a good-looking profile. Take away the fancy modular system, and the Evoline stands on its own as a good all-around helmet. The microsuede liner is removable and washable, and makes for a nice place to put your head. It also includes a handy drop-down

internal sunshade that does a nice job of blocking the sun's ray, and is one of the smoother iterations of this system I have used.

Operation is a little different from the many other helmets I've worn over the years, as the faceshield requires that you raise it from the top center instead of a bottom corner. It still works very smoothly, but it's not immediately intuitive. The chin bar itself flips up and back fairly easily, and opens the shield automatically as you do so. Closing the chin bar is a bit less graceful, but still easy to do so with gloves on.

The toasty weather of late has highlighted that you sacrifice a bit of ventilation with the modular design, but of course opening the chin bar fixes that.

The most noticeable sacrifice for me is noise. While I have owned noisier helmets, the Evoline does create a bit more wind noise on my currently windscreen-less bikes. This lack of wind protection also highlights the solid aero design of the

We shot the helmet on Editor Surj, instead of Fish, to keep things confusing.



Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba

Evoline. In most situations drag is minimal, and I'm quite happy with its performance in wind. Crosswinds do expose a slightly larger side profile, but you have to be looking hard for such instances.

As a fully indoctrinated member of the Bluetooth Comms Club, the Shark made my life easy with properly-sized and located speaker recesses. Installation of my Sena 20S was a snap, and audio performance is on par with every other helmet I've used. Phone calls in town are doable with the chin bar up or down, but freeway speeds require full-face mode.

Overall, the Evoline is an interesting design at a nice price point for the features, quality and safety ratings.

\$379.99 and up. Learn more and find out where to buy at US.Shark-Helmets.com.

The Joy Of Socks CEP Progressive+ Outdoor Light Compression Socks

By Surj Gish

Trigger warning: if you're a cheapskate, or even just frugal, you're gonna want to skip to the next story, unless you're really itching for a reason to send an angry email our way.

Why's that? Ok, I'll tell you, but you've been warned.

So what we've got here is a pair of socks that cost \$60. Not \$60 for like twenty pairs, but one pair. I know, that's a lot of money for socks, Mr. Clearwater Lights and Ms. Termignoni. We'll come to back to that in a minute.

CEP, is part of Medi, a German maker of compression wear, orthopedics and other health and medical technology. CEP focuses on sporting compression wear for cycling, running, hiking and other non-motorized pursuits, and their socks are well-suited for motorcycle use too.

CEP sent me a pair of their bright red Outdoor Light socks, which people without motorcycles apparently wear when hiking. I was a little suspicious of how comfortable they'd be—they're pretty thin in most places, but have strategically-placed padding zones for your ankle knobies and on the bottom of both the left and right socks.

That's right, the left and right socks. Unlike lesser (and less expensive) socks, the Outdoor Lights are shaped differently because—as you may have noticed—human beings' left and right feet are shaped differently, for claimed "perfect anatomical fit." They even have an L and R on 'em so you know which is which without putting them on the find that the ankle padding is in the wrong spot.

That's important, because putting on compression socks isn't as easy as sliding on those crappy clearance rack motocross socks you've been wearing holes in.

It's a bit of work—but that's the point. There's built-in support, which leads to less fatigue. It's not bullshit, although we still gotta get to justifying the \$60 price tag—the merino wool CEPs are all-day comfortable in my Sidi Adventures, and my feet feel waayy better at the end of a day of riding, compared to when I wear other socks. The rest of me still feels beat and busted, of course, but my feet are grand.

So about that sixty bux... First, can you put a price on comfort? Yeah, I suppose you can, and for some of you it might be less than the price of a pair of Outdoor Lights. Ok, what about this? CEP guarantees that their socks will maintain compression for 6 months if worn every day: "You can expect your compression socks or sleeves to last 150-200 wears and washes before compression begins to lessen." Mine have been through a few wash 'n' wear cycles so far, and are still going strong. So they're durable.

They're also made in Germany, which means they're not made by three year olds in leg irons, getting "paid" in cold hot dogs, one for every hundred pairs of socks.

Yeah, I shouldn't joke about sweatshops and / or child labor, but if everyone would suck it up and pay prices that make good materials and non-forced labor doable for quality products, I wouldn't have bring

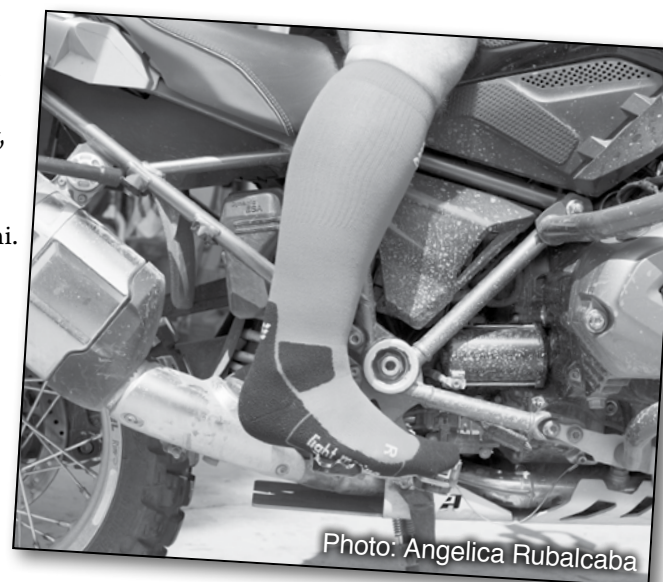


Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba

up these poor kids and their cold hot dogs. See what I'm getting at here?

Here's a less offensive version of the sock-nario. I've bought at least ten pairs of standard motocross socks from Brands That Shall Not Be Named in the last couple years. Without exception, they've all started wearing through and being less comfortable in just a few cycles of wearing and washing. I paid no less than \$20 for each pair, and more for some of 'em. If you're pulling out your little solar calculator, I'll save you the trouble—that's at least \$200, enough for three pairs of CEP Outdoor Lights, which will last until they're cut off me in my next crash.

As an added bonus, the nice old lady at the Platina Store on Highway 36 will tell you she likes your red tights, if you're like me and you wear shorts with your boots, and have a habit of shedding your 'Stich at stops. You heard it here first—ladies love compression socks on sweaty motorcyclists.

\$60. Learn more and grab a pair of your own at CEPCompression.com.

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Artwork by Diego Romo



\$30 includes shipping. The image above will be on the left side chest. Images are in full color.

Barf is extending the Hayden Family Foundation fundraiser - so you can order a memorial shirt. All profit goes to the HFF. Shirts come in many colors Men and Womens. Go to barf general forum and look at the top for the thread telling you how to order. This is a one time run so get off the fence!!

The Rydther Rally is going to Carson City Nevada in September. A great chance to ride the Sierras and get to know a bunch of moto nuts!!! Ride!!!

Got barf???

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rocks and crashes it escaped somewhere, never to be found again.

Giant Loop recognizes this need and has given it a gentler name: the Possibilities Roll Top Pouch. The bag is typical of Giant Loop bombproof products in its heavy



Photo: Max Klein

duty, RF-welded, waterproof construction, with endless attachment points. It's a 3-liter dry bag that keeps your things, whatever you choose them to be, free of dust, mud, and the wet.

I attached my Possibilities Pouch directly to the rear fender of my CRF and it stayed snugly in place for two days of trail riding. The pouch is made with a row of webbing loops down each side, giving the rider plenty of tie-down / tie-on options, or a secure spot for spent shotgun shells if collecting those is your thing (thanks Max!).

I carried a tow line, a 21" tube, and sunscreen for this pouch-testing ride. If I had wanted, there was room enough for

Would I recommend this pouch to my friends? Absolutely! But how do I justify spending \$50 on a dedicated bag that does the same thing as a typical \$30 fender bag, or a free (and free!) spot in other luggage?

Easy. Like all Giant Loop gear, the Possibilities Pouch is designed and proven by people who ride in rugged terrain. It doesn't use brand-specific attachment points. It's easy to securely install and remove, if needed. It's easy to pack, easy to access, a neat, tidy, and correct product that is simple and versatile enough for a day ride or an extended journey.

\$50. Get your own at GiantLoopMoto.com.

Flipping The Shark Shark Evoline 3 Modular Helmet

By Fish

The modular helmet market has generally been perceived as targeted at people like our Editor GS Aerostich. While that stereotype is not without merit, the appeal of being able to open your chin bar has been catching on.

Shark has been making their unique Evoline modular for years, but they've upped the game with the new Series 3. The

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How I Got Four Donor Bikes For \$650

By Julian Farnam
Photos by Julian Farnam,
Bob Stokstad & Surj Gish

I was cruising Facebook and happened upon that two-letter word I eagerly await each year... GO... Dirtbag is on!

But this story actually begins a few months ago, when I decided to begin looking for a suitable donor bike (just can't chop it yet). I was having visions of something based on an EX/Ninja 500, so I begin searching Craigslist for a cheap survivor.

There seemed to be many in the \$1,200 to \$2,000 range, but that wasn't what I was after. Then I found it: "EX500 parts bike - \$250." That would be perfect. I arranged to see it and after brief discussion with the seller found out he didn't have the title, hence being "sold for parts." Now I would normally have walked away, but the seller claimed to be friends with the owner of record and was able to provide contact info. I negotiated the price down a bit to \$200 and decided to take a chance on tracking down the legal owner.

Little did I know the chain of events that this would cause. I spent the next month making phone calls, texting, and sending emails, but no luck. The owner had either

dropped dead, or didn't want to be bothered.

But I'd also begun looking for titled frames for a possible frame swap. A few weeks into that search I came across a cheap Ninja 500 that was complete and running, title in hand for \$500. Over texts, the seller described a minor accident and how that had prompted him to get a newer bike. He assured me that the Ninja was still rideable and that he had been starting it on a regular basis to keep fuel fresh and battery charged. But the day before I was to see the bike, he sent a text explaining that he couldn't get the bike to start—maybe a problem with the starter relay. He was very apologetic and said, "If you still want the bike you can have it for free."

Free!?

I wasn't able to negotiate the price any lower and accepted his offer, and soon, a \$40 eBay battery had the bike running again.

I now had my donor bike, but still had a parts bike with no title and wanted to resolve this, just on principle. So my Craigslist searches continued.

Next was yet another \$500 Ninja 500, advertised as running, never crashed, titled and current registration... but 96,000 miles on the odometer and a minor shifting issue. Wow, I knew these were reliable bikes, but never saw one with this many miles. I made an appointment to check it out, partially just to see what a nearly 100,000 mile Ninja 500 looked like.

It was a little rough as could be expected, and the fairing had been replaced with a cheap fiberglass part as the original had literally decayed from exposure. But it ran—it had been maintained impeccably and ran very well, but occasionally would



Photo: Surj Gish

refuse to downshift for unknown reasons. Well, fuck it. I offered \$400 and had donor bike numero tres. I would later find out the downshift problem was related to a \$6 spring, easily accessed through a small cover on the engine.



Photo: Julian Farnam

Otherwise, Ninja #3 has been very reliable for the several rides I've taken in the hills above Livermore.

I continued to look for a titled frame. Finally, in the motorcycle parts section of Craigslist I found someone parting out a 500 and there was a titled frame for \$150. I began to text with the seller and one of my questions was about DMV registration—any back fees? He wasn't sure but offered to deduct any back fees and penalties from the asking price. The next text he sent he confirmed back fees in the amount of \$157, and that elusive word came up again... free! All I had to do was drive about an hour to pick it up. Done deal. I finally had a titled frame and I could do a frame swap and be off to DMV.

But wait, there's more. Because the original parts bike wasn't 100% complete, I continued looking for 500 Ninja parts to find the few missing bits. Besides, I had begun a daily habit of searching Craigslist

for cheap Ninja deals so why not keep looking?

I eventually came across another "parts bike" that was complete, plus several boxes of "extra parts" all for an advertised price of \$600. I really didn't need or want another cheap Ninja, but there were some bits there that could be useful. In conversation with the seller, he explained that this was an all-or-nothing deal, so even though I didn't want it all, I agreed to see the bike.

The bike was in fair condition with the exception of some bad oxidation on the engine covers from sitting outside in Bay Area fog. It had stopped running because of an electrical short, but a new OEM wiring harness was included. I struck up a very pleasant conversation with the seller and he explained that he just needed it to all go away—even if he could only get \$300 for it.

I countered by explaining my situation in only needing about \$200 worth of parts out of the lot. This included an upper fairing on the bike that was in nearly perfect condition with no broken headlight mounts—nearly impossible to find in usable condition.

We met halfway. I gave him \$250 and loaded the bike and four or five boxes of parts into my van. Crap, 4 donor bikes now. Quadruple crap!

So what's the moral of the story? For starters, there are some good deals out there. Lots of them. I saw many other bikes at very low prices during my searches on Craigslist.

Second, be friendly in your buying encounters. Include your name and additional contact info in your first inquiry. When you meet in person, be friendly. Share a little about yourself and why you're looking at their bike. Not everyone is going to offer a bike for free or even half the asking price, but letting them get to know you, to share in your excitement for the second life you're going to give their precious bike will lessen the pain when time finally comes to negotiate a price.



Julian will presumably turn that pile of Ninjas into something like this.

Photo: Bob Stokstad

If I had to boil the lesson down to two rules it would be: 1) don't be a dick. 2) don't try to negotiate the price in your first contact—best wait until you are there in person.

I hope you find a great deal on your donor bike—I'll see you at Dirtbag.

You may know Julian Farnam from such hits as "Winning The Dirtbag A Buncha Times" and "Making Next-level Cool Shit With Real Engineering." ☺

Quantum Signet-larity Arai's Round Oval & Long Oval Head Shapes Compared

By Surj Gish, with Fish
Photos by Angelica Rubalcaba

Helmets are such a personal, important part of riding, and yet so many riders get it wrong. We complain of noise, when it's likely the bike's screen causing turbulence; about comfort, when we're probably wearing the wrong size or head shape. We, as in riders, not CityBike staff—we're smarter than that, eh?

We—CityBike staff this time—get our hands on and our heads into a lot of helmets, partly because we're motojournalists and it's our job (that's what we tell people), partly because we care deeply about the contents of our nuggets and want to keep the squishy stuff where it belongs—inside our skulls. A few years back, we examined the lifetimes of helmets ("The Truth About Helmets" – November 2014) with the help of the good folks at Bell, who gave us access to their labs, staff, and testing equipment. This time around, we wanted to gain a better understanding of fit, so I emailed my contact at Arai: "Hey, so... can you send us a pair of your latest street helmets, a Quantum-X and Signet-X? We want to write about head shapes and fit and stuff."

Surprisingly, Arai's media folks didn't reply with, "Hey, so... you have any sand? Go pound it." Instead, they sent us a pair of shimmering, diamond white street helmets, their updated Quantum-X and Signet-X.

Actually, it's not surprising at all—Arai is one of a handful of real-deal companies in the motorcycle industry, fanatically dedicated to uncompromising safety and comfort in an industry sector where a lot of companies simply update that year's "collection" with bold new graphics and market that shit as "innovation."

Max wrote about this after attending the press launch for Arai's then-new Corsair-X ("Arai: Everything That's A-right With The Moto Industry" – October 2015) at

Thunderhill Raceway, where he briefly shared the track with the Nicky Hayden. Remember how I said we get it wrong a lot? Max was measured and fitted by Mr. Akihito Arai himself, and told he should be wearing a properly fitted medium, not a large. The sport / track Corsair-X is an intermediate oval, by the way, the head shape midway between the

exhausts in the rear. The airflow provided is exceptional. Fish called it fantastic: "I've never worn a helmet that flowed air in such an effective yet unobtrusive way."

The diamond white X-helmets are priced at \$699.95, although plain white and pearl black are \$20 cheaper, with high-vis yellow listing at \$709.95 and graphics going for \$829.95. Both helmets employ Arai's Variable Axis System, which provides positive, smooth shield action and makes swapping shields super-easy—previously an area of many complaints, rightfully so. Swapping shields on Arai helmets from a few years back used to be a right proper pain in the ass, or at least what passes for a pain in the ass here in The Privileged West, where we unironically complain about such things with vigor.



round oval Quantum-X and long oval Signet-X that Fish and I compared. Arai says the intermediate oval is the most common head shape.

The Helmets

Arai says the Quantum-X and Signet-X are basically the same helmet other than the fit: "The entire helmet has to be redesigned in order to accommodate for the difference in fit, but they both include the same features like the PB-SCLC shell, the same number of vents, etc."

PB-SCLC stands for Peripherally Belted – Super Complex Laminate Construction, which uses "multiple materials and techniques created internally by Arai that deliver both performance and affordability."

It's clear from the git-go that these are very nice lids—the diamond white paint is subtly gorgeous. Venting is extensive, with an intake under the shield, two in the shield, and two above the eyepoint, and six



with an internal sun shield, a symbol of Arai's uncompromising commitment to shell design and structure.

We had concerns about potential aerodynamic oddities due to the Pro Shade, but experienced very little. Fish found the helmet's aerodynamics to be virtually unaffected by the shade's position; I did hear a bit of whistling in the up position on one bike—likely the result of the airflow dynamics of the bike's windshield interacting with the shade, as I didn't hear it on other bikes.

A removable anti-microbial liner lets you wash the interior of your helmet when you notice that not-so-fresh feeling, and there's a water-repellent chin cover that Arai says smooths airflow, increases the amount of air pulled from the mouth area, and reduces wind noise. That all sounds pretty good, and Fish says it works—I pulled mine off to give my beard room to fly its freak flag.

Long Vs. Round

So yeah, these are super-sweet helmets, reflective of Arai's top-notch reputation. But we're here to talk head shapes. Arai told us there are three general types of head shapes: intermediate, long, and round ovals: "The intermediate ovals are slightly longer front to back than they are side to side, where the long ovals are considerably longer front to back, and the round ovals are more proportionate front to back and side to side." Arai also pointed

out that they're the only company making helmets for all three of these head shapes, because, "Proper fitment isn't just a matter of comfort: it's a matter of offering the best protection to the wearer, because a helmet that doesn't fit properly can't protect properly."

Fish and I both wear larges in most helmet brands, but we've noticed differences in comfort when swapping lids. Take a look at the photos and you can see why—our heads are obviously shaped differently, so it follows that we'd need different helmets, even if the overall size of our respective nuggets is similar.

We chose helmets for our initial round of testing in a very scientific way—the blind test. But finding and donning helmets while wearing blindfolds proved to be difficult, so I asked Fish to try both on, without telling him which was which. After all, the helmets are visually indistinguishable, at least at first glance.

Fish chose the long oval Signet-X. I would have chosen that one, too, but mostly because the long oval shape offers more room inside for the juvenile grizzly bear attached to my chin. That flawed selection process ("More room for my beard!") again exposes the problems with how we choose helmets—the round oval Quantum-X turned out to be a more natural-feeling, comfortable fit for me, and presumably will protect my graying gray matter better as a result.

I should tell you that I also regularly wear Arai's intermediate oval helmets, a Corsair-X and a VX-PRO4, and both

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fit me well. I'm sure if I was standing trackside with Mr. Akihito Arai, he'd help me understand why I think I'm equally comfortable in an intermediate or round oval, but I'll save that conversation for the next time I'm trackside with Mr. Akihito Arai.

Fish and I wore our chosen helmets for a few weeks to verify good fit. We then swapped, to see what the other shape felt like—he to the round oval, and me to the long oval. There's a bit of a flaw in our "science" here, because the helmets have now begun to break in to our respective heads, but it's still possible to compare the shapes.

Here's Fish on the differences:



"When we did the blind test, I noticed the long oval's more uniform pressure on my head immediately. The round oval was simply less comfortable with the strap fastened. Prolonged wear first showed the shape difference with the way the breath guard made contact with my nose while wearing the round oval helmet. The round oval's chin bar was also uncomfortably close to my mouth. My days spent with the long oval showed it to break in and really fit my head. It simply got more comfortable, and Arai's quality really showed through, as it got better the longer I wore it."

Similar to Fish's front-to-back discomfort with the round oval Quantum-X, the way the long oval Signet-X fit the top left and right sides of my head was troubling, with

significant hot spots developing in short order. Switching back to the round oval was like a deep breath of fresh air, the neutral fit comfortable and reassuring, with no hot spots for hours at a time.

The CityBike Fit System

Thanks to this most recent journey into the CityBike R&D labs, you now have a foolproof way to make sure you get the best head shape for your own noggin. Simply shave your head, take a photo, and compare to the pictures of me and Fish. If your head is shaped like mine, you're gonna be a round oval, or maybe an intermediate. If your dome looks more like Señor Pescado's, you're a long oval. It's that simple.

No, it's not. Here's the real CityBike fit system: go to one of the multitudinous local motorcycle shops in the Bay Area, the one with the best helmet selection near you. Try on a bunch of helmets, maybe even ask some questions. You don't want it to be too loose at first, because it'll break in—we generally look for a snug fit off the shelf.

Grab the chin bar and check for excessive vertical and horizontal movement, then grab the back and make sure the helmet can't roll off when pulled forward.

When you find the one that seems to fit right, wear it while walking around the shop for a while, and make sure it still feels good. Buy that one. 🍌

EVENTS

September 2017

September 1-4, 2017: Range Of Light Gypsy Tour (Calaveras County Fairgrounds, 2465 Gun Club Road, Angels Camp, CA 95222)

The Range of Light Tour is open to all motorcyclists and features spectacular and scenic riding, showcasing some of the best roads and stunning beauty of the Sierra Nevada mountain range of Northern California. The routes on Saturday and Sunday cover nearly 300 miles and offer GS options.

Each night the ride ends at a fairground with hot showers, cold drinks, catered dinners and grassy camping. Early bird registration is \$90, \$100 at the event. BMWNorCal.org/rol.

September 16, 2017: Moto Envy Show (Black Lightning Motorcycle Cafe, 440 F Street, Eureka, CA 95501)

Cool bikes at a cool destination—the Black Lightning in Eureka—with lots of great riding on the way. Check out our coverage ("Humboldt Green With Envy: 2016 Moto Envy Show" – Pit Stops, October 2016) of last year's show on our back issues page at CityBike.com/back-issues.html.

If you're feelin' showy, register your bike or sign up to share the story of your riding

jacket at BlackLightningMotorcycleCafe.com/moto-envy-show.html.

September 24, 2017: Monterey Peninsula Vintage Motorcycle Show (Moose Lodge, 555 Canyon Del Rey, Del Rey Oaks, CA 93940)

The Old Capitol Lions Club hosts their second annual Monterey Peninsula Vintage Motorcycle Show, benefitting the Blind & Visually Impaired Center of Monterey County. Admission is \$10, advanced registration to show a bike is \$10 too. OCLions.club/vintage-motorcycle-show.html.



Slow racing at Moto Envy.

Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba

They even say "no adventure bikes!" That sounds like a challenge to us.

Anyway, explore some of the least-traveled roads around Clear Lake and witness breathtaking views along the way. There will be two routes: an easy loop and a hard loop. GPS only. \$95 per rider. NorthBayMC.org.

October 8, 2017: All Italian Day Car & Motorcycle Show (Lincoln Middle School, 1250 Fernside Blvd, Alameda, CA 94501)

This thing is apparently put on by car people (groan...) but our pal Pierre told us it's gonna be cool, and we trust him. Plus, it's in Alameda, which while just across those little bridges from Oakland, feels refreshingly like Mayberry, only fancier. The fiesta (or however you say that in Italian) starts at 10 AM and goes till 3 PM, Alameda Time—but if people start tossing affected Italian words into their speech, *Ducati*-style (another groan), we're out, bitchin' Guzzis notwithstanding.

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Round 6: September 23-24, 2017
Thunderhill

Round 7: October 21-22, 2017
Buttonwillow



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September 16: TT

September 23: 100 Nationals & Toby Jorgensen Memorial TT (Final High Points Race)

October 7: ST

October 14: ST

October 21: TT – High Points Award

October 22: ST – BBQ



2017 Indian Chieftain Dark Horse Long, Dark & Handsome (and great at burnouts)

By Fish, with Surj Gish
Photos by Angelica Rubalcaba and Surj Gish

Sometimes I get on a bike and I realize that it's good, but out of my comfort zone. The Chieftain is squarely in that territory. It's long, it's low, your feet are out in front. The bars force you to lean back in the seat—not aggressive-feeling at all, although Indian's marketing paints it as such.

The first impression a bike makes on me tends to set the tone for my time with it. I plan our adventures, as if on some sort of structured dating program. Could this be the one? Do we work well together? Will we kiss on the first date? I'm not willing to comment on our future plans, but the Chieftain and I certainly had a hell of a first date.

The term "bagger" is relatively new to mainstream motorcycling, but the genre itself is one that has deep roots. I have many memories of my dad's '76 Electra Glide, with its windshield and bags; no tour pack, no fairing. It was his workhorse that was still fun to just take a ride on. It could carry me on the back, we could get groceries, and it still made a statement. This particular Chieftain being the Dark Horse, it lacks the back seat, but it does

pack all the attitude it needs to make a statement, while still having nicely sized saddlebags, reasonable wind protection, and a good assortment of useful, utilitarian features.

Indian makes a point of highlighting the confident handling of the Chieftain. The floorboards are placed slightly higher for better clearance, and even in exaggerated daily life with Fish (third person for emphasis), they didn't shed any excess metal. The ergos don't immediately lend themselves to canyon carving, and the long wheelbase is not exactly playful, but the bike responds well to being pushed. Though I put more straight line miles on the Chieftain than twisty ones, I did put it through its paces in our urban hooliganism test courses, and was well rewarded.

The long wheelbase does have a perhaps-unintended side effect of making the Chieftain really proficient at laying down impressive rolling burnouts. I'm not sure Indian directly included this as a requirement in the design spec, but the bike really has the ability to turn you into a burnout hero.

I must admit—with much shame—that for me, the highlight of the Chieftain was the radio. The "infotainment" as it's



letting the "foot lubs" do the work. Indian isn't releasing horsepower specs but claim 119 foot lubs of torque at a modest 3000 RPM. The tune is a nice compromise: lots of grunt with just enough top end that holding a gear for an extra second doesn't slam you into the rev limiter. It's obviously not a race tune, but the practical application of power is pretty useful in day-to-day riding... for burnouts.

The overall aesthetic comes off as big and tough, with matte finish and a solo seat; a mean bike for a lone wolf navigating the mean streets alone. That's a nice idea, but a bike of this size is pretty hampered by the lack of pillion capabilities, even if you just use your rear seat for tying stuff down. Deleting the passenger foot provisions adds an awkward blank space to the side of the bike, leaving the part of the bike between the engine and the remote-locking saddlebags looking a little out of sorts.

If you're really into the long-and-low style, the missing pillion pad does give the bike an almost tail-dragging silhouette, and the short, electronically adjustable windshield keeps things sleek up front. The mechanism changes the height and angle and creates a nice clean breeze for anyone shorter than 5'10". My 6' frame couldn't quite get buffet-free, but I've come to understand that I'll usually need to look to the aftermarket for wind protection. This isn't a full-on touring bike anyways.

But in typical CityBike fashion, I did take it on a sort of overnight mini-tour. No camping involved, so the factory bags were perfect for a couple days' worth clothes and some toiletries—I even had space for a souvenir or two. Camping gear would've been a bit tricky to load, but if I owned this bike I would have found a way—that sleek rear fender is just begging for a simple rack.

Editor Surj and I left The Bay on a Friday for a blitz up I-5 to meet some old dude on a Gold Wing (you can read more about the Magical Geezers on Gold Wings Mystery Tour starting on page 18) in Red Bluff. Surj set a mildly urgent pace on his loaner Wing and we covered the miles quickly. The incompatibility of my torso length and the short windshield meant that I had to slouch to get out of the wind enough to communicate with Surj via Sena, as we discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the two bikes in the context of comparative roll-on tests. I did find the speed limit of the radio's ability to overcome wind noise (well beyond legal). The trip spoke to the Chieftain's roots as a real touring bike, something it still does well on the longer roads, even in its "stripped-down" form.

I traded bikes with Surj on the second day, having demonstrated my lack responsibility with the Chieftain's burnout abilities—but not before I got to experience a bit of its handling prowess on the first section of Highway 36 westbound from I-5. When pushed, the Chieftain responds very well. I don't think anyone will be able to say hustling a bike this size is effortless, but it's certainly cooperative. It brakes effectively and with zero drama—deliberately ham-fisted application will engage the ABS, but it's not invasive. I was never able to unintentionally activate it, which says a lot for the chassis's ability to stay composed



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in many situations. The Chieftain really bucks the “heavy, awkward bagger” stereotype.

After having my burnout privileges reinstated at the end of Highway 36, we enjoyed fantastic meal and company at The Black Lightning Motorcycle Cafe in Eureka. I had to ditch the Geezer Wing Club and make haste for home—not being retired has disadvantages, I suppose.

The ride home was when I really made friends with the Chieftain. Eureka to The Bay via 101 is one of those not-for-fun rides, and riding it solo doesn't make it any better—but it let the Indian flex its foot-lubs and demonstrate its stability. I wasn't on a tight schedule but did want to get the ride over with, so I didn't spare the horses when the passing zones were open. I wasn't heavily laden, but the bags weren't empty—souvenirs, remember? Still, I learned that the Chieftain requires some self-control to keep from constantly rolling into triple digits when making passes.

The grooves and constant changes in the pavement texture had little to no effect on the bike, and bumps were never an issue, either—rare when trying to get through six hours on a California highway. I made it home with one stop, in remarkably unremarkable fashion.

Fish is keeping a low profile, as Indian has made several inquiries about his requests for tire replacement on the Chieftain. Apparently test bikes do not come with tire replacement policies, nor are there mileage warranties expressed or implied. Indian has



also requested that we no longer return their bikes with layers of rubber caked inside in the fenders.

Surj: Papa's Got A Brand New Bagger

I absolutely love the bike the Chieftain is based on, Indian's Roadmaster. But I was worried about how our time with the Chieftain would go. We'd experienced some “issues” with the Scout that Indian had loaned us previously: electrical gremlins and a self-ejecting key. Then, when loading the Chieftain into our van, it resisted (smart bike!), rolling off the side of the ramp and earning a ding in that fabulous front fender. The big bastard (834 pounds wet) put a serious dent in our burly ramps as payback. I guess we're even on that one.

But I needn't have worried. Despite our bumpy beginnings, we became fast friends, fast, and I was genuinely sad to give it up when its return date came.

Indian wants you to believe this thing is a real deal bad motherfucker, and it generally is—we narrowly avoided run-ins with the law in multiple counties. I'm doubtful of such branding, and I was skeptical of the “other American brand's” claims of improved handling, but the Chieftain delivers.

Even better, speaking as a one-daily-rider kind of guy, under that tough guy persona hides a no-nonsense working man, happy to do chores like post office runs and picking up groceries. It's even a good commuter—the fairing is a bit wide for fast splitting but the bags are low and tuck nicely under most mirrors. We all need to take it a little easier anyway, so I put some Lady Gaga on the stereo, cranked it up and just cruised the daily Bay Bridge run: “I might not be flawless, but you know I got a diamond heart.”

Damn right, Gaga.

Fish takes issue with the Chieftain's stripped-down solo act and there is a bit of inherent awkwardness to the spots where the passenger pegs ought to be, but it also kinda contributes to the slab-sided lead sled look. At least,

I stopped caring about those little miscues when on the bike.

But it's hard to deny the sleek, muscular lines of the overall package, and the lack of passenger accommodations is a big part of that. My daily rider, an R1200GS—now there's a comparison!—doesn't have a passenger seat either, but a rack, and that's how I'd equip a Chieftain Dark Horse if our first date were to lead to a \$21,999 love connection.



Indian offers a \$299.99 One-Up luggage rack that bolts on where the passenger seat would have, and similar-looking saddlebag lid racks for another \$349.99. Combined, these would give a good platform for strapping on a dry bag and bedroll, making the Chieftain quite capable for longer trips, without killing its “I'm a loner, Dottie” aesthetic. In fact, dusty bags tied to the back of the bike might even



enhance that image: “I'm a cowboy—on a steel horse I ride...”

The only downside to this arrangement is that the capacious hard bags won't hold a full-face helmet. This is the standard situation with American baggers so it's not a surprise, but that doesn't keep me from complaining. Other than that, the



Photo: Surj Gish

bags are very functional—the long shape means they easily swallow a backpack big enough to hold a full-size laptop. Again with the utilitarian nonsense! Sorry, bikers.

The addition of racks would be my only real change, I think. I'm shorter than Fish, so the windscreen smoothed out the inbound airflow pretty well for me, up to about 80 MPH.

On second thought, might have to look for a slightly taller windscreen too. But Indian's electronically adjustable screen system is quite good, just as it is on the Roadmaster. Hmm... I wonder if I could just jack a screen off of a Roadmaster...

Riding the Chieftain around town before we rolled out for Eureka, I was thinking, “This thing is pretty sweet, but it's so long, and heavy. I dunno, man... it's just too much.”

Riding it on Highway 36 changed my mind, and not the way some of our more performance-minded readers might think.

I loved it.

Yes, it was a lot of work—a lot—but it was a blast. My moment of clarity came in one of the tighter sections, shortly after Fish and Nick nearly pushed each other off the edge playing footsie on their Wings. I was heel-toeing my right foot: forward for a bit of rear brake, backward to use the rear of the floorboard like a proper footpeg. This line dancing wasn't required on the left side, since the 111's massive balls mean you're pretty much good in pretty much any gear. I was also hanging off the bike, which combined with the bike's surprisingly good clearance made for swift cornering with minimal metal left behind.

Now, imagine that: a guy in a two-tone black and high-vis yellow Aerostich and bright yellow Shoei modular—the quintessential moto-nerd—hanging off a gargantuan flat black tough-guy bagger. I do have something of a biker beard, so maybe that counts for something, but it's ridiculous vision, right?

Wrong. It's perfect.

I knew I was doing something right when Fish raised me on the Sena. I'd been trying

to ignore his and Nick's chit-chat as they banged bars and talked trash behind me, but I took notice when he said: “I'm impressed with the pace you're keeping on that thing. I don't think I'd have the stamina to do that.”

Huh... interesting. Fish is fast, and perhaps a teensy bit crazy. He outrides me any day of the week, all day long. But something about the Chieftain had clicked with me, and I was having a hell of a time wringing it out through the up-and-down undulations of 36. By the time we stopped in Mad River for trailer ice cream, I was drenched in sweat.

There's no way around it—riding the Chieftain fast is a lot of work. But it's doable and it's really fun. And here's the kicker—I was slated to be on the Gold Wing for the next few days, but I kinda wanted to keep riding the Chieftain. There's something glorious about workin' it on the totally “wrong” bike, that turns out to be just the right bike—it's why crazy people make their FXRs capable of beating sportbikes on Redwood, for example.

Two things to note: first, our bike had some of Indian's upgrades on it: a high-flow air cleaner and blacked-out Stage 1 pipes with 6-shooter (click click, bang bang!) tips. These add about \$1,800 to the price of the bike, and presumably contributed at least a little to the grin-inducing character and output of the engine. But I'll say this—

based on my previous experience with Indian's hulking art deco v-twin, the 111 is a killer engine and I doubt that our take on the bike would have been significantly different in stock form. Those pipes sound great without being too loud, but aren't uh... technically legal in California. So you'll need to register your Chieftain in one of the “free states,” as the “well-organized militia” loonies call the states bordering the Golden one.

Second, as we went to press, Indian had announced substantial updates to the Chieftain Dark Horse for 2018. The front fender is now “open” instead of the expansive old-timey Indian-style sheet metal still used on some of the other five (yes, five) variations of the Chieftain. The 16” front wheel has been replaced by a 19-incher, and the bike sports what Indian calls “highway bars,” which look like crash bars to me.

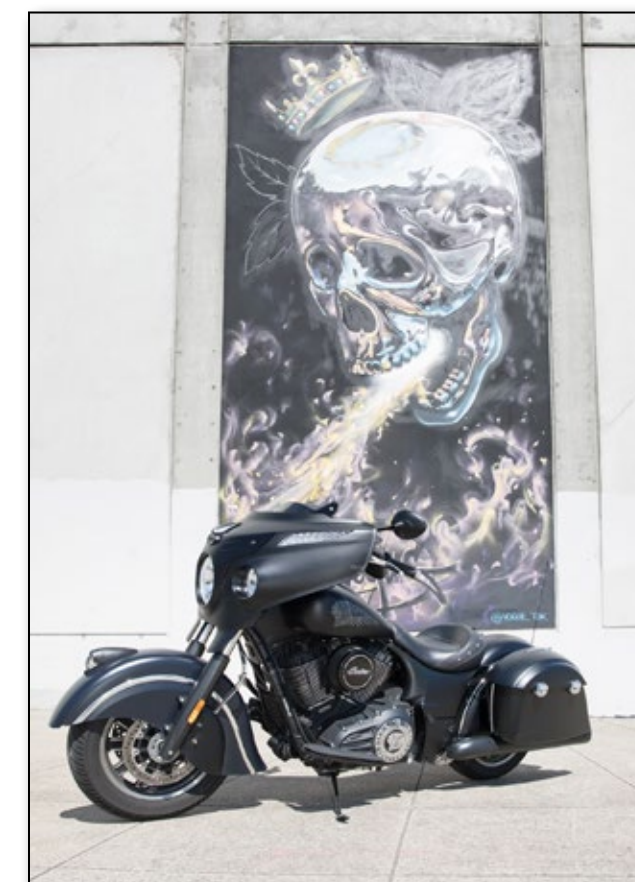
The biggest news, though, is probably the new Ride Command display, a 7” touchscreen head feeding the 100-watt sound system. I don't care too much about external audio on motorcycles—in fact, I think it's a little silly and probably annoying for surrounding vehicles to be cursed with my poor musical choices—but a good integrated GPS ranks high on my list of things that make a motorcycle enjoyable for longer rides.

The bad news? Even without the addition of bold new graphics, these upgrades add

a whopping two grand to the price of the Dark Horse, making it the same price as the Chieftain Classic, which has the same Ride Command system and crash bars, and retains the cool Indian head fender and adds a passenger seat. Sure, it doesn't look quite as badass, but I bet it's just as much fun.

And anyway, a flat black paint job is really just a rattle can away—and then I can pontificate about “built not bought,” and the value of working with one's hands.

Surj is currently designing a flat black Givi topcase mount for Indian's Chieftain, in order to make it “the perfect commuter motorcycle.”



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



8:00	Practice Groups 1-5
9:15	Riders Meeting
9:45	Race 1: 650 Twins
	Race 1: 450 Superstock
	Race 1: Formula II
10:05	Race 2: 750 Superstock
	Race 2: Legacy Heavy
10:30	Race 3: 450 Superbike
	Race 3: 300 World Super Sport
	Race 3: 250 Superstock
	Race 3: Legacy 250
10:50	Race 4: Open Superstock Sponsored by San Jose BMW
	Race 4: Open Twins
11:15	Race 5: 600 Superstock Sponsored by Keigwins@theTrack
11:40	Race 6: Open GP Sponsored by Fastline Cycles
	Race 6: Super Dino
12:00	Lunch Break
1:05	Race 7: Formula I Sponsored by AV Spaces
1:30	Race 8: Formula IV
	Race 8: Legacy Middle
1:55	Race 9: Formula Pacific Sponsored by Dunlop Race Tire Services
	Winner's Circle Presentation
2:40	Race 10: 700 Superstock
	Race 10: Lightweight Twins Sponsored by Spears Racing
	Race 10: Formula Singles
3:00	Race 11: 600 Superbike
3:25	Race 12: Open Superbike Sponsored by Pacific Track Time
3:55	Race 13: 750 Superbike
4:20	Race 14: 250 Superbike Sponsored by Catalyst Reaction
	Race 14: Legacy Light



The AFM Tours MotoAmerica

It has been a while since the pro rigs have graced Sears Point Raceway (Sonoma Raceway if you are one of those people that likes to go by the current name). While the AFM has not been absent, there is something special about the vibe at a pro level event. That's why 20 riders jumped at the chance to bring their Formula IV bikes out and put their talents on display on the national stage.

The weekend consisted of two heat races split between Friday and Saturday, and the main race on Sunday. The first heat was gridded based on points for the season, the second heat was gridded based on the results of race one, and the results of the second race set the stage for the main.

Twin Works Factory brought out a stacked deck of riders. The usual suspects were there — Bradley Champion, Josh Davies, Tom Dorsey, and Martin Sullivan — but that was not all Zoran had up his sleeve. Jeff Tigert made his return to the club on top of a yellow bike as well.

Also on SV650's were Peter Hively, Cliff Ramsdell, and Sam Romick with Romick starting from the back of the grid in race one due to lack of points. Romick didn't let that hold him back as he drove from 20th to 5th in the first race.

The lone single on the grid was Chuck Sorensen who was aboard an Aprilia SXV 550.

The rest of riders were on 450 triples — Greg Clouse, Owen Flatley, Paul Johnson, Wesley Lakis, Dave Moss, Gordon Pull, Max Sawicky, Elliot Shiu, Ian Smith, Matt Vereaghe, and Marc Zarra.

After a 10 lap main it was Martin Sullivan on top of the box chasing down Jeff Tigert for the win, and Chuck Sorensen rounding out the podium.



Tigert had broken out to an apparent runaway victory, but suffered a minor mechanical problem that kept him off the top step.

Honorable mention shout out to Gordon "The Don" Pull for setting a new albeit short-lived 450 lap record of 1:47:520 only to have it broken by Paul "The Dentist" Johnson a lap later with his 1:47:320.

In addition to the F-IV race there were a handful of AFMers out on the MotoAmerica grid.

Wyatt Farris, Sebastiao Ferreira, Jason Lauritzen, and Tyler O'Hara were out there on 1000's running with the big dogs.

On the 600 front Ezra Beaubier, Jovan Betton, Deion Campbell, Brandon Crawford, Deivide DaSilva, Michael Kim, John Knowles, Andrew Lee, Justin Merrick, Trevor Nogueira, Greg Sharp, and Marc Zarra represented the AFM regulars. Andrew Lee ended up on the second step of the podium in race two.

The KTM Cup also had some AFM representation with Cory Ventura finishing second in race one and finding the top of the box in race two.

Cory had AFM company on the podium in race one with Brett Voorhees finishing third.

Also on a KTM Cup bike was Marc Edwards who showed consistent improvement as the weekend progressed.

Not even the sidecars were safe from our club members.

Our chief registrar, Kinsy Daughhette swapped her registration responsibility for monkey duty and helped bring the rig to a top five finish despite never working with the rider or machine before.

Huge thanks to MotoAmerica for having us out there with them, to our club members that came out and showed the nation what we can do, and to all of the tech, board of directors, and other behind the scene people that made this event a success!

Photos courtesy of OXYmoron Photography. Top: Tigert leads Sullivan and Sorensen into turn 2.

Bottom: The trio celebrate on the box.



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| Texas Tea Oil | Zoom Zoom Trackdays |



Rules For The Pits

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| Speed limit in the pits is a walking pace (5mph). | Alcohol abuse and drug use is prohibited. |
| No intentional wheelies, stoppies, or other exhibitions of speed. | Only entered riders and race officials may enter the racing surface |
| Kids under the age of 16 may not ride or be a passenger on any pitbike. | Be a good neighbor. Keep the noise down and consider turning off your generators after 10pm |
| Pets must be leashed at all times. | Do not leave fuel cans, tires, or any other trash behind. This is a fineable offense. |
| Please be aware of traffic in the pits at all times. | Remember to have fun! |
| Riders are responsible for their pit crew and guests. | |



Wang Dang Sweet Gold Wing

By Surj Gish, with Fish & Max Klein
Photos by Surj Gish

This story starts, as our stories so often do, with some trash-talking 'round *CityBike's* lavish World Headquarters in Oakland's rarified Crack District. I'm talking to the Honorable Nick Harris, Western States rep for the American Motorcyclist Association, and he's telling me how he's thinking of buying a Gold Wing. I laugh and make some dumb joke about his impending Wing-curious retirement, but not much later he tells me he's taken his curiosity further than most dare and has a line on a well-equipped Gold Wing, a former press bike, for a "good price." I tell him if he gets the Wing, we'll go for a real ride together, as long as he promises not to get us lost.

The good price turns out to be too good to pass up, and Nick's bluff is called. He buys the Wing, and I ask Honda for a longer-than-usual loan of a Wing for *CityBike*. The crew starts thinking of ways to stack up miles, none of which involve spooning on set of TKCs, surprisingly.

I'm sure American Honda would prefer we detail exactly how our bike was equipped, and that one guy that keeps emailing about how we're not spec-y

enough will be fuming at this point, but I'm not going to get into the minutia. We had the one with everything but the air bag. I know this because Nick looked it over and told me so, that it was just like his, probably right around the time he was thanking his lucky stars that his newly-purchased, former press bike hadn't been ridden by *CityBike*, although according to what I've heard and seen, there are some less-talented, worse offenders currently masquerading as motojournalists.

Anyway, this "everything but airbag (and girl)" status makes it—I think—a "2017 Gold Wing Audio Comfort Navi XM ABS" model, and that bitchin' black and blue paintwork adds a thousand bucks to the "base" price of that level, making the MSRP a marketing friendly "under thirty thousand" \$29,979.

If you're inclined to push your purchase price over thirty thousand, there are myriad accessories available, most of them reasonably priced, from a \$59.95 saddlebag cooler to a \$37.95 12v accessory socket. Ok, that one's not that reasonably priced, and goddamnit, for *under thirty thousand*, Honda should really include a power port. Although, an accessory socket for Honda's own Rebel 500 is \$12 more.

The usual suspects are available: chrome, lights, and so on—but our Audio Comfort Navi XM ABS model came well-equipped for the road, and the things we really wanted weren't available from Honda: Bluetooth, a modern GPS, and uh... louder pipes? Just kidding, fuck that noise. We would like an electronically on-the-fly adjustable windscreen, though. This pull over, flip the levers, herky-jerky the screen up business is for the birds.

We could write pages about where Honda's segment-defining maxi-tourer fits into motorcycle culture, and of course "the industry," and what its existence says about American motorcyclists, and indeed, Americans in general. We're not going to do that, though we're happy to "discuss it offline" if you'd like to meet up some time, gentle reader.

While many riders, gifted with a multitude of 100% accurate preconceived notions, tend to write off the Wing as a "someday, maybe" alternative to a Harley, to be washed and waxed frequently in one's waning years, in reality the bike is so much more.

Pull the bodywork off, and you see the motorcycle equivalent of a real-deal body-on-frame heavy-duty truck. The frame is massive, as is the engine. If that's not enough for you, stick your head under the right sidecase and get a load of that rear brake—it looks like you could swap it into service on an F250 and not be hurtin' too bad.

The dash—and it's real dash, not a "dash" the way we talk about gauges on other bikes, could have been lifted from a Honda Accord. The bodywork even *feels* automotive—if you've taken a bumper cover off a modern car, you know the flexy, rubbery feeling I'm talking about. The front of the Wing, the panel below the windscreen—it feels like that, not the usual crispy, plastic-y feel of motorcycle body panels.

All that automotive-ness adds up to serious poundage—Honda quotes 904 to 933 pounds wet. Good thing there's a phenomenal flat-six to push this thing around.

We were all surprised and inspired by the Wing's motivation. It hauls ass, in layman's terms. Even better, it handles unbelievably well, not just for a bike its size, but for a bike. Period. The faster you ride, the better it gets.



It reminds me of a mid-90s E320 Cabriolet I acquired years ago in trade for a Special Edition Speed Triple. That car started feeling really good at 85-90 MPH, and the first time I rode our Wing I thought the same thing. It's hefty, sure, but it just hunkers down in the corners at high speed and *sticks*.

It's an amazing motorcycle, and I don't mean amazing in the breathless, meaningless way that modern managers seem to feel compelled to utilize when describing their mediocre-ass employees these days. I mean actually amazing. Stellar, even.

Back to the Nick 'n' Surj ride, which we'd started calling Geezers on Gold Wings. In truth, neither Nick nor I are really geezers, but it's part of the joke. We decided to ride north, with Fish accompanying us on the infraction-inducing Indian Chieftain (check that on page 13), hit Highway 36 and the Black Lightning Motorcycle Cafe before splitting up on the way into Oregon. I'd visit some of *CityBike's* biggest fans, also known as my family, and Nick would go... uh... be an old guy on a Gold Wing, I guess. We'd then reconnect in Oregon and make our way back to Sweet Home California.

And that's what we did. I won't bore you with the details of all the Sena conversations, like the "Oh shit, oh



shit!" in Eureka, where a Chippie at an intersection somehow missed or ignored Fish's rolling burnout on the Chieftain, or the "Oh shit, oh shit!" on one of the tight sections of 36, where Fish dragged the Wing's underthings in such a way that Nick was actually worried for a second or two.

But in a nutshell, here's how the Gold Wing rulez:

- If you run into literal tornadoes of bugs in lake country, you can duck behind the screen and not care, laughing about those



Harley guys at the last gas station, their faces so coated with bug guts it looked like stubble.

- If you take off on your own for an unsanctioned top speed run, minus salt flats, and somehow fail to notice the CHP truck parked in plain sight halfway across the valley you've been blazing across for a couple miles before you pass him, you may get a bit of a break on your documented speed, because "You look like a nice enough fella."

- If you ride up the coast in the early morning, you won't care about the fog and mist and cold because it can't touch you.

And here's how it droolz:

- At this price, the tech needs some updating. Compared to the other über-tourer, BMW's K1600 series, it's kinda old-timey. Bluetooth, a modern GPS that is easier to deal with when underway, and an electronically adjustable windscreen would do wonders for... well, for our bitching. And that'd be good for everyone.

- It only gets 35 MPG, meaning that the 6.6 gallon tank will hypothetically get you over 200 miles of range—but this is one bike that's comfortable enough that bitching about range isn't total bullshit.

- It kinda sucks in deep sand.

It's not like these "issues" kept us from riding the Wing hither and yon. We put so many miles on it that I'm a little surprised Honda is still taking my calls.

We'd be remiss—as we often are—if we didn't mention the "competition," which is 1. big Harleys and Indians, 2. BMW's K1600s, and 3. maybe Yamaha's new "transcontinental touring" Star Venture.

The reality is that all these motorcycles have more modern tech and creature comforts, so if Bluetooth is critical for you, the venerable Gold Wing is out. But I've done big miles on all of these other bikes, except for the new Yamaha (stay tuned!) and I'm hard-pressed to say that I'd choose any of them over the Wing if I was going to disappear for a few thousand miles. Or days.

I *really* like Indian's Roadmaster. But its riding position, and the riding positions of the MoCo heavyweight tourers I've ridden, don't even come close to the functional

neutrality of the Gold Wing—hands down the most comfortable, *usable* cockpit I've experienced. The K1600, like the Wing, is an amazing motorcycle. But it's not as confidence-inspiring in the twisties as the Wing. The Yamaha? We'll see.

So what's the conclusion here? Well, if I win the lottery, I'm definitely buying a Gold Wing. But that's true of roughly 43% of currently-produced motorcycles.

How about this? If the 2018 Gold Wing has an electronically adjustable windscreen and a modern, integrated GPS, you guys are gonna see a GS, a 900SS, and a bunch of dirtbikes and guitars in the *CityBike* classifieds.

Editor Surj likes big bikes, and he cannot lie. You other brothers can't deny.

Fish: Hoon Wing

At this point in my *CityBike* career, I've firmly established myself as the resident hoon. It's a title I carry with pride, for sure, and my heart swells a bit every Editor Surj sends me a photo and accompanying text message, like "Think you can launch a bike off this freeway ramp?"

My burgeoning rep-hoon-tation does make it hard to be taken seriously at times, like when I want to talk about long distance comfort or fuel economy. I've also learned that I'm not really allowed to comment on tire wear.

The upside is that I now have a *duty* to see what kind of trouble each bike we ride is capable of getting in to (and—hopefully—out of).

My initial plan for the Gold Wing was to use it as sensible transport to one of my off-road races in Texas. When that race was canceled, I did what any sensible motojournalist would, and headed for the canyons.

After picking up the Wing from American Honda in SoCal, the first stop was obviously the infamous "snake" section of Mulholland Drive. Poor planner that I am, I headed out there on a weekday, passenger aboard. I gained a new perspective on our lane widths up here in the Bay Area—we

actually do have it pretty good. Regardless of the cramped spaces, managing the 900+ pounds of Wing in traffic was not nearly the daunting task I expected it would be. There is a larger amount of skill and effort required to hustle the bike around, but I never found myself in a situation where the size or weight was overwhelming.

Like Surj and Max, the one thing that did rub me the wrong way was the radio and nav setup. Since I was in a foreign land of sorts, I did find the onboard GPS to be helpful. The screen is nicely sized, placed for easy viewing, and has a useful display arrangement with the ability to split and deliver other information as well.

The bumper? You have to hear the voice guidance through the on-board stereo if you don't have a wired headset. Nothing announces your arrival at an intersection like 80 watts per channel of "now turn left." In addition to that, the head unit doesn't lend itself to external media inputs. There's a USB port in the topcase but I don't usually carry a memory stick loaded with Slayer—I tend to stream music on my phone. I was forced to live with terrestrial



radio, which meant that NPR was played at the highest volumes I could stand.

As an added bonus, the radio's audio would cut out when the GPS was giving voice guidance, even if I had the voice muted. I missed valuable moments of *Fresh Air* because of this.



Luckily, what the Wing lacks in modern on-board entertainment capabilities, it more than makes up for in fun factor. Seriously.

I planned to wind my way to The Snake via Highway 1 and Malibu Canyon Road. I chose Latigo Canyon by looking for the windy-est road on Google maps, and I think I hit the jackpot. Tuesday morning found the road to be traffic-free, and I was able to give the Wing a thorough flogging.

I must disclose that I was riding two-up, but the Wing's push-button adjustable preload made this a non-issue. The bike has a turn in that truly needs to be experienced, and lean angles are very surprising given the bike's appearance. Transitions are smooth and predictable, and the brakes are fantastic.

In standard Fish fashion (Fish-ion? Fission?) I found myself carrying way too much speed for the decreasing radius switchbacks, but the brakes made short work of shedding that inertia. Corner after corner, the Wing would just take whatever I threw at it. No signs of brake fade, no invasive electronic nannies saying no. Just effortless fun.

The engine deserves its own paragraph of praise. I'm usually not a fan of ultra-linear power delivery, as "linear" usually goes hand-in-hand with "boring." While, yes, the Wing's power delivery is kind of boring, it's also rapid and strangely invigorating. I frequently lost sight of the two-bikes-worth curb weight, and that's due in part to the jet-like thrust the engine provides. "Funner," peaker, gruntier power delivery would likely highlight the heft and bulk of the bike. As is, the Sport Couch™ minimizes its impact on the rider. Corner exit power is phenomenal, it can power wheelie, and triple-digit speeds are easily attainable and almost laughable, except to Surj and the Lassen County officers of the California Highway Patrol.

I also learned of a syndrome that can apparently be transmitted to other non-Wing riders in your proximity: Wing Rage™. While giving the Wing the beans in several different canyons both north and south, I would come upon, and often pass,



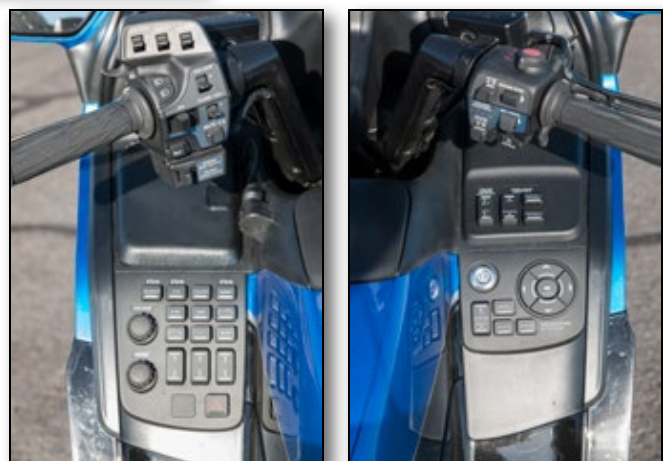
I also forget about that minor pain in the ass completely when I stuff a week's worth of groceries into the Wing's factory storage compartments.

As Surj says, we all had some preconceived notions of what the Wing would be, but the reality is that it's much more than just a mile-absorbing RV,

sportbike riders. Riding etiquette on public roads is always variable, but anecdotal evidence suggests that being passed by a Sport Couch tends to inspire riders to push beyond their comfort zone. One particular 600cc sportbike rider nearly crashed due to his refusal to accept that the Sport Couch had caught up to him and was, in fact, travelling faster than him.

Wing Rage is real—don't let it happen to you.

Back home, living with the Wing on a daily basis is a reasonable proposition. The weight and size do become more apparent when you have to move it to access your work space, like I do. The reverse function is great, but you have to condition yourself to remember to use it. It also requires the engine be running, so you have to start the bike, engage reverse, and re-park it. Not really high-effort, but it does make me enjoy the fact that my other bikes are substantially easier to just push outside.



an elderly person's tourer. The chassis is very good—the bike is capable of long, easy freeway cruising but just as easily can transition to Wing Rage-inducing switchback duty.

As someone who enjoys utilizing “improper” equipment for various tasks, the Wing made me grin with its propensity for surprising people with its capabilities.

While I have had more fun in specific activities with other bikes, few—if any—have been as consistently enjoyable as our time with the Wing was. From enjoying NPR in traffic (with the occasional Dead Kennedys track thrown in, thanks to the USB stick) to sitting in the luxuriously heated rear seat with the cruise control set, to overcooking a corner, dragging a crash bar and using the engine to correct my lack of talent, the Sport Couch continuously made me smile. And all the while, it was ready to justify its existence by transporting people and goods almost anywhere I needed to go.

So the next time you see a Wing in a parking lot, take a second look. Pay attention to the ground pegs, the slightly-grained tires, and the minor bluing on the brake rotors. Sport Couches are real.

Fish mistakenly saved the draft of his part of this story on the same memory stick (who still uses those?) that held his collection of Wing Music™. As such, we now

have undeniable proof of his love for the music of Ke\$ha and Megan Trainor.

Max Takes The Wing Home By Way Of Vegas, Baby

When I found out we'd have “our” Wing for two months, I knew I was gonna want to slap some miles on the beast. At first, I had plans to head up to Canada, as Saskatoon is

fun to say. Then I thought I might go visit my mom in Florida, but between Editor Surj riding the Wing, round two of the AFM season, and my mom gallivanting about on the open ocean, that was not meant to be.

These roadblocks didn't stop me from doing some good old American-style sightseeing on the now *CityBike*-proven tourer. But with my flight time limited to a couple days at the tail end of our time with the Wing, I had to plan my route carefully.

My final plan involved a pre-dawn takeoff toward glorious Tonopah, Nevada. I mapped a route on 88 to 395 to 208 to 95 so I could visit the totally not creepy Clown Motel. From there, I figured I'd crash at a friend's house in Las Vegas for the night and use his place as a jumping-off point for a run to the Grand Canyon, before heading west to Oxnard to GP Suspension. I'd then surrender the bike to American Honda in Torrance, CA, a couple days later.

Leaving the Bay Area before sunrise meant that the Gold Wing's ample windscreen and heated seat and grips were welcome help in squelching the early summer chill. As I floated over Carson Pass—where there was fresh snow on the ground—toasting my hands and ass, I really appreciated just how warm this Wing can keep its rider. I figured there was no way all that wind protection was ever going to get old, that I'd always going to be glad to have it...

Then the temps got out of the seventies.

By the time I stopped for a couple photos outside the totally not haunted Clown

Motel, I was dreaming of trading the wind protection and heated bits for a bucket of ice water and a dozen of *CityBike*'s legion of bikini-clad, mostly female fans, each with her own bucket of ice water. Or his. The ice water is the key thing, really.

Because the giant windscreen, uh, screened so much wind, getting any sort of cooling breeze was next to impossible. Even though I was in my light ‘Stich, the amount of sweat I was producing can only be described as torrential—and it was only in the low nineties at this point in the trip.

After creating new nightmares, I rolled out of Tonopah in what felt like the general direction of the surface of the sun. In addition to the rising temperatures, after about 400 miles I noticed that my knees were a little sore. I'm not saying I was woefully uncomfortable, but I could see a little limping and some old man noises in my near future. The slight discomfort turned out to be a blessing in disguise as I discovered that standing up on the pegs not only relieved the aches brought on by Father Time, but also put me in enough open air to cool off a bit from Mother Nature's hot breath.

I hit Vegas around sunset after logging just over 600 miles and settled in for the night. I'd heard the Grand Canyon was a good day trip from Vegas, and Google was kind enough to give me choices for routes to both the north and south rims. They were both *about* the same distance away, so I decided to take the northern route out and the southern route back.

Here's where those of you that understand geography are laughing pretty hard at me.

After four-ish hours and about 250 miles I hit the North Rim and reflected on just how awesome the Gold Wing is. The Gold Wing is basically the good version of what happens when you park an Accord in Oakland overnight—you get it back missing two wheels, with no doors. While it is a massive hunk of metal with slightly antiquated technology (No Bluetooth? Really?) it corners very well, especially considering its weight, and the power is impressive in every gear, making driving out of corners effortless. Even adding a passenger does not phase the Wing, and why should it?

I punched the Hoover Dam into the GPS as a reference point and was thoroughly confused that the bike was trying to direct me back the way that I'd come. I wrote it off as “GPS wonkiness” and pressed on without question. After all, the GPS tried to guide me over a closed pass earlier in the trip.

I really should have questioned it.

As some of you may know, they still have not built a bridge from the North to the South Rim, and for whatever reason there is not a rim road... and taking the southern route back added on four hours and 210

miles to my trip—a few more thanks to my “where does this road go” detours.

Instead of a comfortable nine hour, 520 mile day, I somehow stuck myself with fourteen-plus hours and just shy of 800



miles in the saddle... in the Arizona Desert.

Remember how I was complaining about my knees? That tall-guy discomfort and the lack of airflow remain my only real complaints about the Gold Wing.

I found myself standing up for five miles at a time, much to the confusion of the truckers I passed at eye level. Normally, standing up on a street bike is caused by a numbing of my taint, but the Gold Wing's seat is downright plush. And supportive. In other words, comfortable for the long haul.

Because of what many have called my lack of basic common sense, I ended up back in Vegas sometime in the wee hours of the morning, which completely fubared my plan of leaving for LA sometime in the wee hours of the morning.

Instead, I'd be plodding through the desert in triple digit temps—103 if you believe the giant thermometer in the appropriately named city of Baker, 109 if you're more trusting of the Gold Wing's gauge.

I put close to 1,800 miles on the Wing in four days. I hit all the tourist spots: the Clown Motel, Las Vegas, The Grand Canyon, part of Route 66, a Cracker Barrel... all the spots. If I had the chance I wouldn't change a moment of it, except for planning the trip for a time of year when the Arizona desert might be slightly less hellish. The Gold Wing is a high-performance couch on

wheels—with reverse—and if it was not for the heat I would have done another 1,800 miles.

Max is the SF chapter Director of the AFM. His dreams now consist of a tiny car chasing him into the pits at Thunderhill, where two dozen clowns pile out of the car to laugh at his body position. ☹️

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Calistoga: Half-Mile, Full Smile

By Max Klein
Photos by Max Klein

After two years off, flat track made its way back to Calistoga, and like every other race this year, did so under the American Flat Track name for the first time. Some of you might remember that the 'Stogie was canceled in 2015 due to wildfires and was skipped over in favor of the Santa Rosa Mile in 2016. Check out our discussion with former Calistoga / Santa Rosa promoter Terry Otton and the California Flat Track Association's Randy Kremlacek ("Calistoga To Santa Rosa, Sliding Sideways" - September 2016) at CityBike.com/back for more of the recent history of flat track in Northern California.

The Calistoga's absence seemed to make our hearts grow pretty damned fond though. Vendors and spectators abounded at this year's event, and the atmosphere was one of excitement and anticipation.

I was not immune to those feelings. I was basically a walking smile the entire day, and have to think that American Flat Track's efforts had something to do with it. From this spectator's (and motojournalist's) point of view, there have been some significant changes made since AFT took the reins. It has been more than just a name change, more than just bold new graphics.

First off, there is actual TV coverage. Making the sport more accessible for fans is huge; putting it out in front of potential new fans is huge.

Second, competition. Serious competition: Indian whipping out a devastatingly dominant bike (and stacking their deck with some of the best riders on the planet) might not gel with your definition of competition, but trust me. The more factory teams we have out there, the better it is for not only the sport, but the entire motorcycle industry.

And third, as always, safety.

But seriously: after the tragic deaths of Jethro

Halbert at Calistoga in 2014 and Kyle McGrane and Charlotte Kainz at the Santa Rosa Mile in 2016, American Flat Track seems to have stepped up the already significant focus on keeping the riders out of harm's way. In the AFT rounds I have attended, more hay bales and air fence were deployed. AFT also started track prep at Calistoga before my super early 9 AM arrival, which provided a safer racing surface, one that required less maintenance throughout the event.

But I wondered if the changes went beyond my outsider observations. I showed up early to chat with some people that are deep into the high-speed-sideways mix, to see if the competitors and team owners agreed with my assessment of AFT.

"Everybody is seeing a major difference," said team owner Richie Morris of Richie Morris Racing. "Back when I started in '14 and '15, flat track was kind of on the back burner. It wasn't the bastard

stepchild, but road racing took so much energy from the group. There was one guy for the whole series. For lack of a better word, flat track was fairgrounds. Nothing was a big sponsor presentation, just good ole' boy racing. It didn't have the marketing aspect to make it intriguing for fans. The product was there, but nobody was marketing the product."

While the Calistoga race (and most of the rest of the series) does

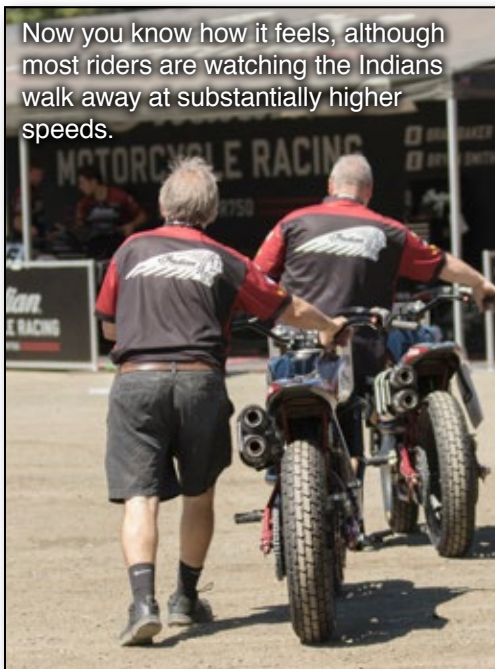


take place at a fairground, the spectacle is grand enough that it is easy to forget. You don't just show up, sit down, and wait for bikes to whizz by. There are plenty of pre-race activities and vendors to visit, plus the fan pit walks. The new series does not hold back: advertising, banners and announcements are everywhere—and not just at the track. Wandering around downtown Calistoga for lunch I noticed many businesses welcoming race fans. I'm not saying that the AMA was bad at creating a fun vibe, but AFT is better at it.

"With the addition of Michael Locke, some real focus started going on. Number one, they started their own promotion so they could set a standard on the way that the tracks get promoted," Morris continued. "There can be different promoters, but the format is the same wherever we go."

Morris went on to point out that while the sport has not changed that much, American Flat Track has noticed that the fan base has

one thing," remarked Morris. "A smooth-running fast show, with some kind of activity all the time is needed, and it



Now you know how it feels, although most riders are watching the Indians walk away at substantially higher speeds.

makes it harder on the team side. We have to be prepared and stay ready for that kind of schedule."

He wasn't kidding. I hung around close enough to the people in charge of keeping the show flowing, and witnessed them making on-the-fly adjustments to assure that the millennials used their phones to take video of incredibly close racing instead of watching cat videos. Even with a couple of red flags the entire event stayed pretty damn close to on time.

While the day of the event might get a bit hectic, one change that Morris asked for was more time to get set up.

"They were nice enough to give us a day ahead of or at least earlier on the day of the event to come in. There's no rush." Said Morris, "For years they only gave us a couple hours before tech, and everyone was fighting for positions, fighting to get through tech. Nobody had time to set up a professional pit, something eye-pleasing for the fans. Now they are looking at the forest, not just the tree of a particular race."

"There are still the true diehards that are going to spend the whole day talking about rim sizes and walking through the pits. They don't care about downtime, but the new demographic, the millennials, it's hard to keep their focus on

That extra setup time separates a professional event from just some bikes at a fairground. One look at the Richie Morris Racing pit and you know you are

couple of years prior to that we felt like it was best to go back to the singles, really just to get my confidence back. I want to go back to the twins, they are a heavier bike, a faster bike, but the competition is obviously the best in the world."



They're off!

Texter commented that the format is the biggest thing that she noticed in the transition to AFT. "It's still the same riders, you know, a lot of familiar faces, but we run a heat race, a semi, an LCQ and a

main. Now it is more of an elimination style compared to years past. The laps in the main event are still the same, and the goal is still to win."

Speaking of winning, there was a bit of racing out at Calistoga.

Jarod has been around the sport for 9 years—he started at the ripe old age of 10, and was the 2015 GNC1 Rookie of the Year. He began racing on an RM 85 and now rails a bored-out Kawi 650 Ninja in the 750 twins class. He agrees with his team manager about the marketing. "They are doing a lot of promotions and that is getting us a lot more viewers. Having us on TV is growing the sport for sure."

After running a twin last year, Shayna seems to have found a home in the singles class. "It just fits me better," said Texter. "I am the smallest rider on the tour right now, that and since we are new team and trying to do R&D, and I had a rough

On the singles front, Tanner Dean, in just his fourth AFT Singles race, pretty much owned the evening. He threw down the fastest lap of qualifying, won the heat race, was bumped into second (literally) for the semi, and then went on to take



Tanner Dean on his way to the win.

the win over Brandon Price and Kolby Carlile who finished second and third respectively. Did I mention that Dean had not finished higher than 11th prior to coming to Calistoga and it was his first National Half-Mile?

For the AFT Twins class, a quick review of the season's results thus far would have those inclined to bet putting all their cash on an all-Indian podium for the AFT Twins class, and for good reason. The bikes are smashingly good, piloted by some of the best in the business. Plus, the last time the pros spun laps at Calistoga, current Indian riders Brad Baker and Jared Mees finished 1-2, and if Bryan Smith wouldn't have had engine issues, he might have gotten on the podium back in 2014.

Mees seemed to struggle all day, that is until the main event where he put on an absolute clinic. He was up 3.5 seconds by the 9th lap when racing was delayed due to a crash in turn four. It was business as usual once the track was cleared—Mees cruised to a 4.5 second lead and then dialed it back to take the checkered "just" 3.5 seconds ahead of second place.

Sporting his deceased brother's #69, Sammy Halbert came in a comfortable second place, leaving the battle for third to Bryan Smith and Brad Baker. Smith came up .067 seconds short of his teammate giving Baker the final position on the podium.

After the track went cold I couldn't help but notice that I was not the only walking smile out there. The grizzled, die-hard fans were arguing about



Jared Mees, winner of the 2017 Calistoga Half-Mile main event.

how third place came down to tire pressure, and the millennial fans were twitterbookstagramming the results. Both generations of fans would agree that flat track's return to Calistoga was a bar-banging success, and I look forward to the 2018 Calistoga with great anticipation.

Max is the SF chapter Director of the AFM, and since he's the only racer with CityBike leathers, keeps bugging us for a flat track sponsorship. We offered him the hopped-up-but-sorta-busted-up-too TTR125 from the darkest corner of the CityBike World Headquarters basement, but he declined, saying, "There's no minibike class in AFT, dammit!"

Well, maybe there should be. ☺



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Walkin' The Walk Artwork by Mr. Jensen

The vests carried colors on the back, and Christian slogans above and below the insignia, which invariably incorporated a cross. Lots of patches. Even the bandannas had crosses and slogans.

A dozen riders had Tribe of Judah and Jewish star patches on their vests, whatever those things mean. Some had Riding for the Son patches. Some had patches with biblical references, numbers of passages, I believe.

One couple had a personalized license plate reading: IWAYUP. At first I thought it was a cautionary comment, something like Rubber Side Down or Shiny Side Up. Then I realized it meant that there's only one way to heaven. Oh-kay...

I was the only person in a fabric jacket and no vest. And no bandanna. The riders' leather gear appeared relatively new, the black still smooth and shiny. I saw no weather-beaten vests, looking as if they'd been ridden for thousands of miles in the rain. Clean bikes, clean clothes.

And clean language. The conversations were no different than those among other riders of my experience, but there was no profanity. And I never heard anyone or anything badmouthed.

Because I was from Denver and unfamiliar with the area, generally between Fort Collins and Greeley, Colorado if you're curious, a husband and wife on a Big Twin Harley sort of adopted me. We were riding in a small group, maybe half a dozen bikes.

If there were 100 bikes on that ride, 90 were Harleys, almost all Big Twins. There were a few Sportsters and one of the new Harley 750s. There were Gold Wings, including a white one and a white trike, a Honda Shadow... and one clean, unmodified Kawasaki ZRX1200, red.

As I recall, my ZRX was the only four-cylinder bike on the ride. Imagine. All the Harleys and the Shadow were twins, and Gold Wings are sixes. As usual, my bike looked like something your niece might borrow to take her motorcycle proficiency test.

One guy asked me how long I'd been riding. I suspect he was surprised I'd been at it so long. I think that among these club riders, almost entirely H-D mounted, the feeling is that once you've matured as a motorcyclist, once you're done with childish flirtations with foreign bikes, you'll realize that what you wanted all along was a Harley.

The couple who were looking out for me introduced themselves and walked me over to the group with whom we'd be riding, and introduced me to them. People asked me where I was from. When I said I live in central Denver, someone said that there are five or six CMA chapters there.

No one asked me what church I go to, or if I've been saved. No one asked me (all day) a single question that might have felt personal or intrusive. People seemed interested in me and mildly curious about me, but never in-my-face. Never.

At each checkpoint, we drew cut-out paper ribbons with numbers printed on their backs. At the end of the ride, there'd be a prize for highest total number and lowest. All that is pretty normal poker run practice, but *this* is not: We never stopped at a bar.

We stopped at a Harley accessory store-slash-wrecking yard. We stopped at a cafe or two. We stopped at a leather goods store. No bars.

I never saw anyone slip a flask out of a pocket or saddlebag. I believe that all the people with whom I was riding were sober.

I'm used to riding with people who are drinking, done it dozens of times, but it was reassuring to think that no one was impaired. I feel I should add that in all those miles with all those checkpoint drinkers, I've never watched anyone ride like he was drunk. Or even just buzzed.

At the third checkpoint, the couple who'd been making sure I couldn't get lost or lonely had to leave the ride to rush to the finish and get lunch going. They introduced me to another couple who took over my care. I rode with them and their friends all the way back to Johnstown, and the post-ride barbecue... at a church.

The husband of this second "looking out for Maynard" couple's first name was Darwin. No kidding. I did not feel it was

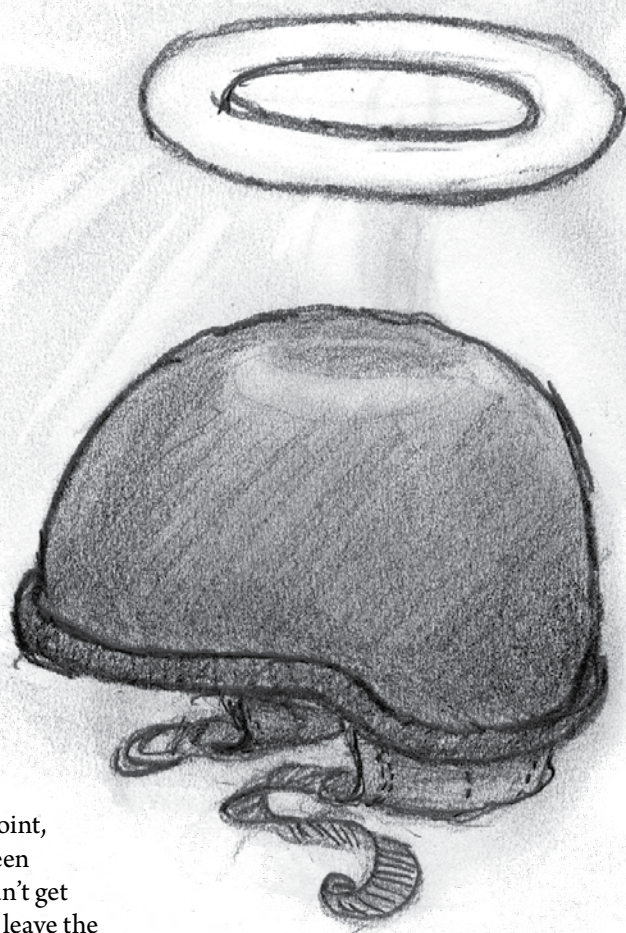
my place to ask him how he feels about his notorious namesake.

The ride cost \$10, the proceeds to help with medical expenses for an injured rider. Along with your ride map, you were given a ticket you could use to try to win any of a couple of dozen items displayed inside the church. I attempted to win a helmet but was unlucky.

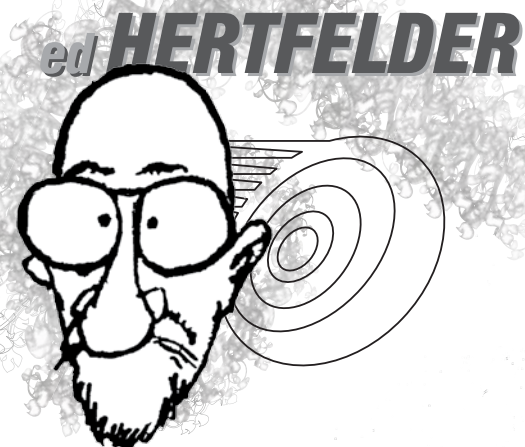
There were five checkpoints, each staffed by four or five people. At the finish in the churchyard, there were burgers and brats, two kinds of salad, baked beans and cold drinks—in abundance.

I tell you about the prizes and food and raffle items because even though there was all that help along the way and all that stuff on offer, no one asked me for a penny beyond my \$10 registration fee. I believe *all* the money went to the hurt rider. The prizes, time and groceries were donated.

I feel sure that the bible or your clergy person says you're supposed to treat a stranger as if he might be a deity or saint or Buddha in disguise. I was a stranger in the land of the Christian Motorcyclists. No way could they have been friendlier or kinder to me. And my tiny motorcycle.



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](#) and post something: a story or a photo. And be careful out there. ☺



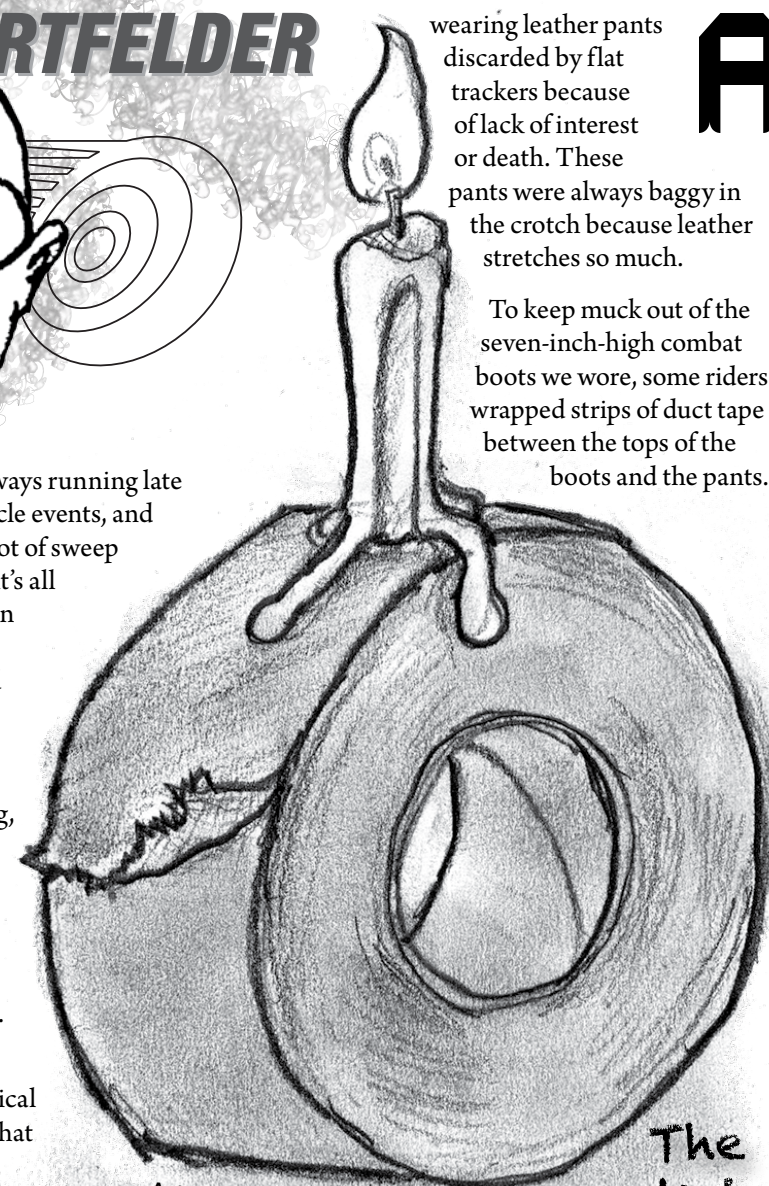
Since I'm always running late at motorcycle events, and meeting a lot of sweep crews, I suppose it's all right to run late on an anniversary. February marked an anniversary year of *The Duct Tapes*—meaning that those balding, paunchy old guys who tell me they've been reading it since they were kids have aged *terribly*.

Early duct tape uses were so comical it convinced me that someone should document the funny side of dirt riding.

It was in the late Matchless / early Triumph era, and many riders were

wearing leather pants discarded by flat trackers because of lack of interest or death. These pants were always baggy in the crotch because leather stretches so much.

To keep muck out of the seven-inch-high combat boots we wore, some riders wrapped strips of duct tape between the tops of the boots and the pants.



Artwork by Mr. Jensen

The only thing more useful to a dirt rider than duct tape is cash.

Let me tell you, the first time a rider did it, he was in for a big surprise.

The poor fellow would ride to the start chute of an enduro and suddenly realize that sitting on the motorcycle had taken all the slack out of his pants and his feet couldn't reach the ground!

He'd topple sideways and domino a few BSAs, a Royal Enfield or two and maybe a Greeves.

When I did it, I left one bike still standing at each end of a crowd of ten—it looked like a 7-10 split. Frank Soltner, lying there

ANNIVERSARY

with an Ossa on his leg, said "Thanks for dropping in, Ed," with almost no sincerity in his voice.

Some of the uses for duct tape are hard to believe. A Bultaco owner once showed me a spark plug that had been tightened by an overstrained linebacker; the stripped threads from the cylinder head were welded to the plug. This plug had punctured a hole in the bottom of his gas tank under full throttle on the Bob Moore trail. After plugging the fuel leak with a wad of Doublemint gum, he wrapped another spark plug in duct tape, cranked it into the engine and got the bike out of the gravel road under power.

I asked him if he'd considered what might happen if the plug let go again and punched a hole in the Doublemint. He said he had planned for the possibility by duct taping two sandbags under the tank. Where did he get the sandbags? Easy. He had taken off his gloves and filled them with sand.

Incidentally, the trail was named for Bob Moore because it was there that he proved

Soon, a surprisingly bad four-piece band struck up and that same lady did a sort of aerobics workout wearing a tasseled G string and two five-pointed stars cut from my duct tape.

It says a lot for the adhesive qualities of the stuff when you see it sticking to a lady who looks like the "before" model for a weight loss program. At one point in the past ten years, I claimed to have never seen a motorcycle without a piece of duct tape on it somewhere. However, my bluff was called at Summit Point Raceway by a fellow campaigning a four-cylinder zoomer that ran his Visa card out to the limit. Sure enough, I couldn't find a single strip of duct tape on it and was about to admit defeat when one of his riders showed up. This fellow was wearing 35 percent leather and 65-percent duct tape—he had a full roll of the stuff layered up on each knee!

All I could do was look at the owner and shake my head 'cause when that bike roared, it sure had a lot of duct tape on it.

But getting back to my anniversary. Over the decades I'd almost forgotten the reason for the title—it had something to do with the Nixon tapes. Some of those paunchy, balding guys tell me that was before their time. I certainly don't want to remind anybody because it's about to be replaced by the Iran tapes, or maybe the Russia tapes.

So, like we said way back in 1977: The only thing more useful to a dirt rider than duct tape is cash. And if you lose your gas can 40 miles out of Barstow, cash just ain't gonna help a whole lot.

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Saturday. I knew I wanted to ride but didn't know where. I went to a website called Let's Ride to see if there was a poker run someplace away from Denver traffic. Sure enough, there was an ad for one, starting and ending in a place I'd never heard of, Johnstown, just off the interstate maybe a 45 minutes' ride to the north.

The run's start was in a mall parking lot in front of a coffee shop, *not* in front of a bar. I noted clean black leather vests and smiles on clean white faces. I looked at the backs of the vests and realized I'd just registered to ride a Christian Motorcyclists Association poker run.

I saw whites and Hispanics, all of them in colors-club uniform, a bandanna-slash-headscarf, jeans and often chaps, a t-shirt and the vest. Some wore either silly WWI-style or contemporary half-helmets. A good number wore actual, effective helmets like yours (probably) and mine.

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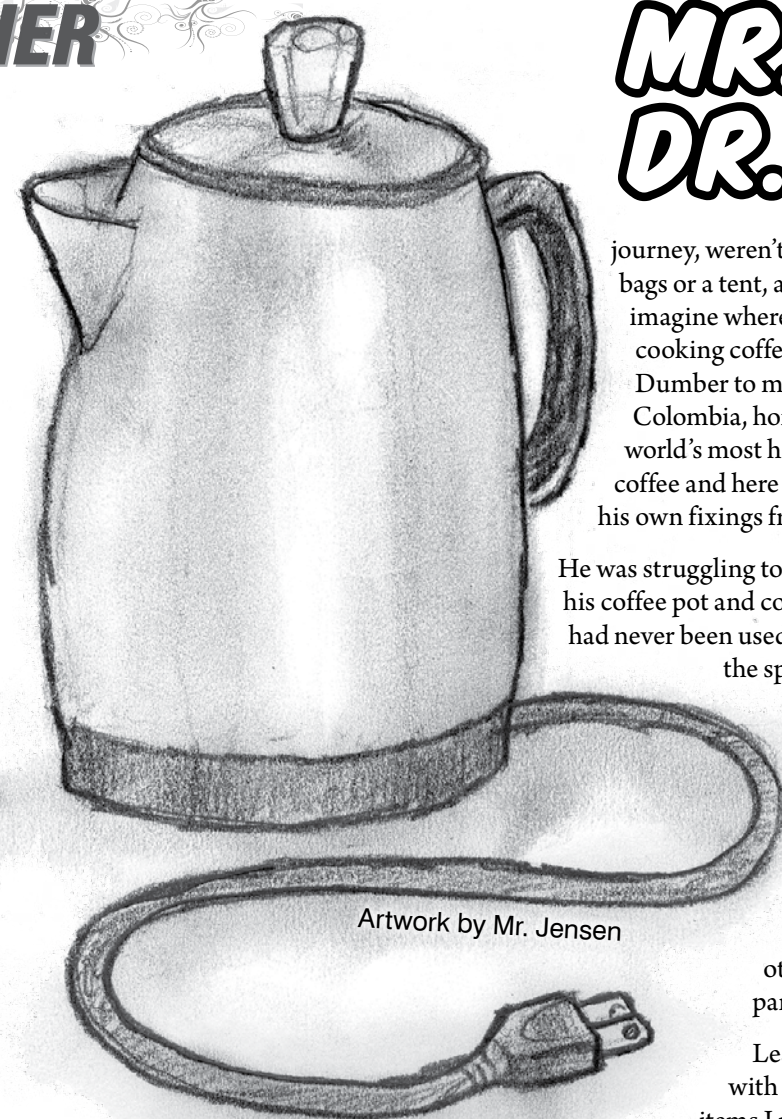
Mr. Adv Dumb wrote I was "self-proclaimed as one of the top motorcycle adventures in the World." I laughed, thinking how dumb it was to make such a foolish statement and then hit the Send key. I often said I went the other direction, being at the bottom instead of on top. Some may think I've got much of adventure motorcycling figured out, but I still do dumb things and to prove such, I used our travels together as an example.

We'd met in Colombia where he'd booked us in a five-star hotel at his expense. Loading his luggage into the hotel van I was surprised at the volume and weight of his bags, over 170 pounds including his carry-on bag. I remember asking if he'd packed his new girlfriend, to which he replied, "Nope. This is just stuff I need on our adventure road."

Later, when he had all his stuff spread around his hotel suite while trying to figure out where he could load it on his 650cc motorcycle, I picked up one of two six-inch long heavy metal black sticks that looked like Magic Markers. I asked, "And these are for?" He said they were for security and one was for me. I looked at it, and patiently asked what could be secured with it?

Mr. Adv Dumb explained it was a James Bond-like safety ink pen with a clip on the side to carry it in a shirt or coat pocket, like a writing pen. Pulled apart it was a real ink pen. One end had a small bright light. The other end was the security part, a hardened metal tip that was used to break the passenger windows in a taxi when he or I had been taken hostage to be held for ransom, the windows and doors having been locked electronically by the taxi driver.

I thought, "How dumb is that? You're in the back of a speeding taxi and you break and push out the rear passenger window. What are you going to do next, crawl through



Artwork by Mr. Jensen

MR. ADV DUMB & DR. ADV DUMBER

journey, weren't carrying sleeping bags or a tent, and I tried to imagine where he would be cooking coffee every morning. Dumber to me was we were in Colombia, home of some of the world's most highly acclaimed coffee and here he was carrying his own fixings from the USA.

He was struggling to find space for his coffee pot and cooker. Since both had never been used, and again in the spirit of his first adventure, I offered to make room in my panniers to carry them, thinking they'd not stink-up other luggage in the panniers.

Leaving his room with my new luggage items I noticed a pile of jeans, and asked what they were for? He said only wore black jeans and thought he'd better have enough in case he needed replacements along our route and couldn't find black ones. I thought of the weight and space his 10 pair of jeans would take, thinking how little a couple of packets of black clothing dye would cost and weigh. I thought it was a dumb thought to think he would wear blue jeans, or purchase blue jeans and have them dyed black, so I said nothing, more in the spirit of his adventure.

As he was rolling up his black jeans, black T-shirts and two black sweatshirt hoodies I saw a bag of motorcycle turn signals and asked, "Why so many?"

He said they weren't heavy and I should be educated enough to know that our make and model of motorcycles had never been imported to South America, thus we might need them. In his spirit of motorcycle adventure travel and lack of shade tree maintenance, I did not offer to carry any

of the spare turn signals, thinking it would be dumb to allow him to know I had spare capacity given his luggage needs versus mine. Doing so might find me carrying one of his spare pairs of shoes.

I learned that Mr. Adv Dumb was not so dumb when it came to the four spare turn signals. Through pilot error he crashed often enough to need all four. As for the black jeans, he gave away to bellmen and security guards at our hotels—six pair to lighten his load, as well as one of his two black hoodie sweatshirts.

On our last day in South America I returned to him the unused coffee pot and cook stove. As I pulled out the James Bond security pen to return it I saw the ink had leaked and covered the inside of my pocket. "Dumb!" I shouted to myself. I should have wrapped it in a plastic bag before putting it in the pocket, never having needed it to write anything or break a window to escape kidnapping.

As we parted at the airport, Mr. Adv Dumb said I had proved my skillfulness as a motorcycle adventurer in seeing we safely returned to the USA. I replied that our journey had certainly been a learning adventure and my biggest learning had been not being dumb about what I carried in my luggage as wanted versus needed.

He submitted that I had taught him a few things about dumb items he had carried, like the non-working GPS and electronic hotel door security device that he gave away along with the six pairs of jeans.

Reflecting on the stuff he and I carried around South America I had to admit some of it was pretty dumb. I laughed when I later saw him send the note about being my being a self-proclaimed top motorcycle adventurer. A real top motorcycle adventurer would have stepped on his dumb adventure ego that first day in Colombia and tossed about half of what Mr. Adv Dumb was packing out the fifth-floor window of the hotel. Instead of calling me Dr. Top Motorcycle Adventurer, I wrote to myself I had been dumb not to toss his stuff and that I should have printed on my business card for future travels with him, in the spirit of adventure, "Dr. Adv Dumber."

Reflections of Dr. G's current adventures while circling the globe with a motorcycle can be found at rtwmotorcycleadventurerally.blogspot.com. Or, just get a copy of his all-color coffee table book, *Down And Out In Patagonia, Kamchatka And Timbuktu*, available at MotorBooks.com. The Good Doctor noted, after making a presentation at The Adventurers' Club of Los Angeles, that an esteemed member opined, "Today, if seeking adventure, one must look for trouble," not run from it. ☺

sam DEVINE



"The proverb says that Providence protects children and idiots. This is really true. I know because I have tested it." - Mark Twain

While coming down Fell Street towards Divisadero, a white Mercedes coupe makes a right turn from the center lane. They cut off a nondescript grey economy car that has to slam on its brakes. There's plenty of time to stop the motorcycle, but it's annoying and there's the sense that this incident contained more luck than the next one will. It's the sort of thing that should just be let go, but the schedule is open for a few more hours, so the Wee-Strom makes a right, too.

"Hope it was worth it," I say, leaning over to look in the window.

"Wait, what?" Says one of the two guys in the car.

"I hope it was worth nearly killing me to make that right turn like that."

"What are you talking about?"

"You made a right turn from the center lane."

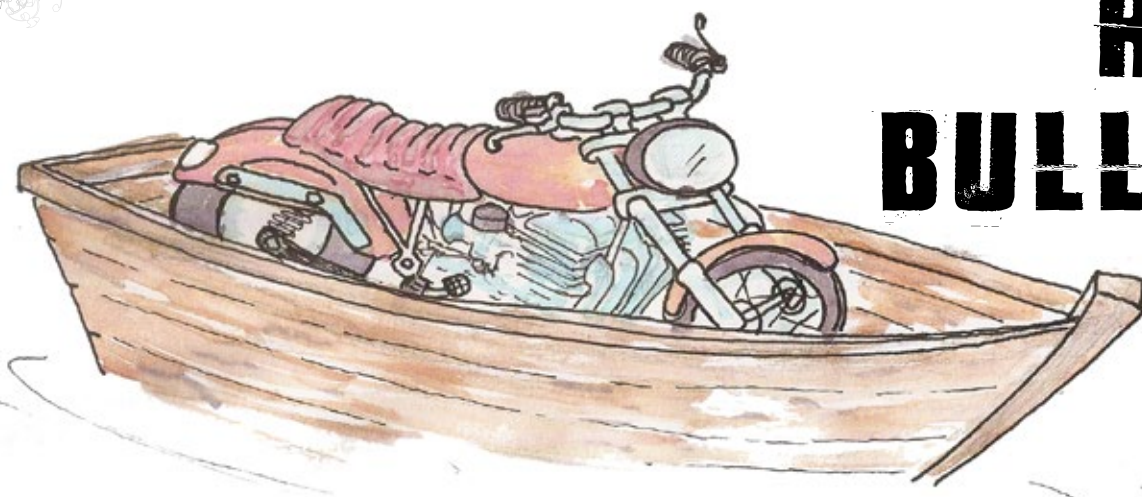
Wearing earplugs, I can't really hear what they're saying in response—and jeez, I care even less. These dudes are young—oddly young to be driving a luxury two-seater. The stairwell insult I'll think of later is: "Does your mama know you drive her car like that?" Of course, this is a big city, so two young dudes in a nice sports car can mean other things than it usually does in the suburbs...

For reasons I cannot recall through the rage, I say, "Yeah, well try to keep up with me then!" And I pull away. Almost immediately, I hit a red light and they pull up on the right. "These streets is dangerous, man," says the driver. "You gotta be careful."

"Oh, really?!" I ask as the bike lunges towards the driver's window so we're within striking distance of each other. Again, I can't really hear what they're saying, but it's close to: "So, are we gonna do this or what?" And they pull over in front of Fly Bar.

Flipping the bike around, I come to a stop in the middle of the tranquil side street, with little concern for traffic.

"Did I just park for no reason?" Asks the driver after he drops his Adidas



RAGING BULLPUCKY

Artwork by Sam Devine

framed by blue, buzzing neon flashes of rage.

Sigh.

The better path is to let the fog clear, give the windshield wipers a chance to clean the vision and relax. But it's a tougher row to hoe than it is to

flip flops out of the car and slides his socked feet into them, presumably to kick my ass. Seeing this, I can't help but laugh, but then I immediately realize that this guy is either: A) The stupidest person I've ever encountered—seeing as I'm fully geared up and he could throw twenty punches before I would even become concerned—or B) packing a gun.

His passenger in the ball cap says something. Shamefully, I respond with: "I got ear plugs in so I can't hear what your bitch-ass friend is saying, but don't turn from the center lane." Then the bike blasts westward through the intersection, missing the shift to second, accidentally winding up in neutral and lunging forward, looking the fool, but perhaps unwittingly dodging a bullet (an unlikely but entertaining notion).

Riding away, I feel an odd regret. What did I expect would happen? "Golly, sir, thanks for pointing out my error! I'll sure be more observant next time." No. Of course they were ready to brawl at any roadside comment. In a sad weird way, there was a small positive effect: they pulled over and at least thought about what had occurred, even if they thought it was malarkey. But that flimsy benefit hardly justifies the risk. Moreover, I feel like a cop—not in the serving the community sort of way, but in the contemptible, abuse of power sort of way.

Other riders have shared similar moments with me. One rider informed a driver that she'd nearly struck him, only to be cussed out while the driver's young daughter watched from the passenger seat. Another motorcyclist caught up with an errant driver and immediately ripped off the car's side-view mirror, throwing it through the open window and yelling: "Here, you don't seem to be using this!"

What causes this urge to self-police the streets? Is it just too hard to think clearly when the adrenaline gets pumping after a life-endangering moment? Perhaps it's brought on by the anguish of losing friends or the twitching eyeball that's gun shy from previous get-offs. Maybe it's a resentment ground into us by the daily commute—gazing through rush-hour traffic and into the bottomless

pit of human shortcomings: self-importance gilded with laziness, ornamented with carelessness, and paraded about in opulent, four-wheeled death machines that we perceive as family members and maneuver in whatever manner suites our mood.

These little bits of bad news pile up on the mental doorstep and we become righteous in our desire to sweep it all aside. To fix things. To make it right with the world. In moments like these, the rational brain shuts right down—this is evident in the patches of blackness and the words "Hulk smash!" where there should be a cohesive, linear flow of memories. Perception fades to a dull, red anger boiling behind the brow as headlights streak by the splotches of purple night and the jagged skyline

describe. Our metaphorical toes get stepped on every day, leaving most of us routinely ready for a flip-out. Some little thing sets us off and the harder we struggle against it, the more mountainous the molehill becomes.

Asking a retired friend what he thinks of the whole thing, he says: "Just slowly row your boat downstream. Yah know? Merrily, merrily, merrily? Life is but a dream."

Sam is our SF-based columnist. He motorbikes, kitesurfs, picks guitars and is currently destroying his hands by way of stand-up bass. Get a copy of his book, "Fifty Rides," at SamDevine.com. ☺

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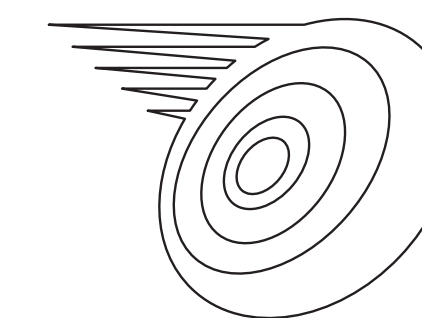
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Have P.A. / Will Travel...

I have been "The Voice" of Ducati Island at Moto G.P. ('98 - '06) the Wiskeyville Hare Scrambles ('96 - '12) ...Most recently, La Ducati Day, La Honda, MOTORAMA Car Show, Lafayette, sub Announcing at Continental Sports Car Challenge Laguna Seca, Santa Rosa Flattrack for Circle Bell Motorsports... and more... References and resume available. Find me on Facebook: "Duffyduzz Promotions" for all contact info - or - call 510-292-9391 - or - E/M: duffyduzz@yahoo.com

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Locals Only: Barry Gwin's KTM-powered Lambretta Of Death



By Fish
Photos by Max Klein

Barry Gwin is a scooter guy, picked up the addiction in high school.

Used his school's shop program to modify parts for his Lambrettas because no aftermarket existed for them at the time, financed his habit by recovering abandoned Lambrettas from city dumps and selling them for \$75 each through the scooter 'zine *Wham*. Some of those scooters are now worth \$15-25k.

Not satisfied with just flipping abandoned scooters, Barry turned his addiction into a business right out of high school and started San Francisco Scooter Centre (SFScooterCentre.com). He's been a fixture in The City ever since, and the shop has been a means to facilitate his pursuit of what he considers the ultimate scooter.



KT Brettta once, the decision to sell it was made.

So what we have here is an almost completely bespoke chassis, artfully covered with Lambretta bodywork. Every aspect of the scooter has been altered in some way.

Packing 50hp (Yeah, fifty 2-stroke, I-want-to-kill-you horsepower) into a vintage '60s scooter required some serious engineering. The custom swingarm stands out as the most obvious change in the engine compartment, but the wheels and brakes are tastefully upgraded. All of this was done in a way that didn't alter the look of the scooter formerly known as Lambretta in a noticeable way. The only external visual cues are the radiators, and they're quite tastefully installed.

While the bike is visually understated, going down the street, it's anything but subtle. The noise is unmistakably

mean, the exhaust emitting a deep boom accompanied by the 2-stroke's signature crack. On the stand, the engine has enough reciprocating mass that the Lambretta hops around as it idles. When Barry takes a couple passes up and down the alley behind the shop, it's enough to make me decline his offer to take it for a spin.

Yeah, you heard me, I'm scared of a scooter.

If you're unfamiliar with the sound of a piped and ported 2-stroke MX bike, then you're missing out. But hearing that sound as an orange-painted blur of a scooter passes by is one of the most confusing sensory experiences I have ever had.

Barry's most memorable quote from our conversation: "I have no business riding this thing."

His real world use involves frequent trips to freeway speeds on the frighteningly undersized 12" wheels, beating up on Ducati riders from stoplight to stoplight, and destroying the egos of Harley guys on the freeway.

Old habits die hard, and Barry has always loved showing up the stereotypical, adversarial biker at a

stoplight with his modified Lambrettas. Now it's just too easy. ☹️



Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba



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Full(er) Price?

Koz emailed about the stripped-down, sexed-up Fuller Motus ("Motus Operandi" - August 2017) on the cover of our last issue:



So how much is the Fuller Motus?? I can't seem find an MSRP (or the equivalent) anywhere...

You know what they say, Koz. If you have to ask, you can't afford it. Honestly, we were afraid to ask—thought it might seem rude, and also betray our fears of Editor Surj flinging it through the wall of an abandoned Del Paso Heights warehouse with Sactown's finest (the cops, not An) in hot pursuit.

Anyway, as noted in the story (you did read the story, didn't you, Koz?) it's a custom one-off, built from the fifth Motus made, ever. The notion of an MSRP doesn't really apply.

We did do some math-ish exercises—figure \$36,975 for an MST-R, and guess at some number of hours of labor, not cheap given Fuller's rep. There are some other materials and parts, too. Even with conservative math, it's pretty easy to get into "man, I could buy a whole bunch o' bikes" territory.

But... nothing is confirmed, and this could be totally

presidential (which now means 100% bullshit), but word on the street is that the Fuller Motus is something of a test, to see what the public thinks of a naked Motus.

We're actually bigger fans of the sport touring concept, although the Fuller version is Salt Flats in August hot, and hopefully the chorus of crybabies bawling about the paintwork choices won't deter the good folks at Motus from enabling those who are more into the *au naturel* styling of a nakey-nakey super-duper-bike.

Wait... "adolescent expletives?" How fuckin' dare you, Eric? Our curses are at least at the level of a smug know-it-all trustafarian, five years into a four-year degree. We work hard ensure a high level of *maturity* in our swearing, for fuck's sake!

But back on topic... we really need Redwood to be open by Thanksgiving so we can do our annual Fuck Black Friday ride. It's actually called Ride Friday Give Back, of course, and raises money

In what he described as a "blatant attempt to get a CityBike t-shirt," Michael sent us a bunch of selfie-bikes, which is our new word for a selfie taken with a copy of CityBike. Yeah, you couldn't have figured that out for yourself, could you?



Come on man. If you really want a shirt, you gotta act like you like the magazine at least a little. Smile!



Update From A Road Scholar

Eric emailed with an update on East Bay road conditions:

The repair of the washed-out culvert on the Alhambra Valley Road at the Castro Ranch intersection is underway. A giant crane, two huge berms of excavated dirt, and the early stages of concrete forming for a new bridge are evident. A flagworker thought it might take a month or more to complete. The Redwood Road repair is still in the Engineering stage; it should be done by Thanksgiving, according to D. Lucera of the Maintenance & Operations Depart. The Palomares Road repair may be done in three weeks. Not quite the same, without the Redwood Rd. open to get to it, but...

for Alameda County CASA, but we still informally refer to it as Fuck Black Friday sometimes because that was the original concept, and we're the functional equivalent of easily-butthurt teenagers with underdeveloped, potty-mouthed senses of "humor." ☹️



Surely the political clout and adolescent expletives of City Bike Magazine have expedited these projects, hmmm?! With Sarcasm (just another type of Love, really...)

We haven't fact-checked these ETAs, but we did have to look up "fact-checking"—we'd heard it's something we're supposed to be doing, and have now decided it sounds like too much work for the small benefits of accuracy and journalistic integrity. Anyway, point is: take these dates with a grain of salt, and if you need some salt to do that, we've got approximately four buttocks inside and stuck to the undercarriage of our van after some recent unsanctioned speed trials at Bonneville, in the Fully Loaded Transit 250 class.

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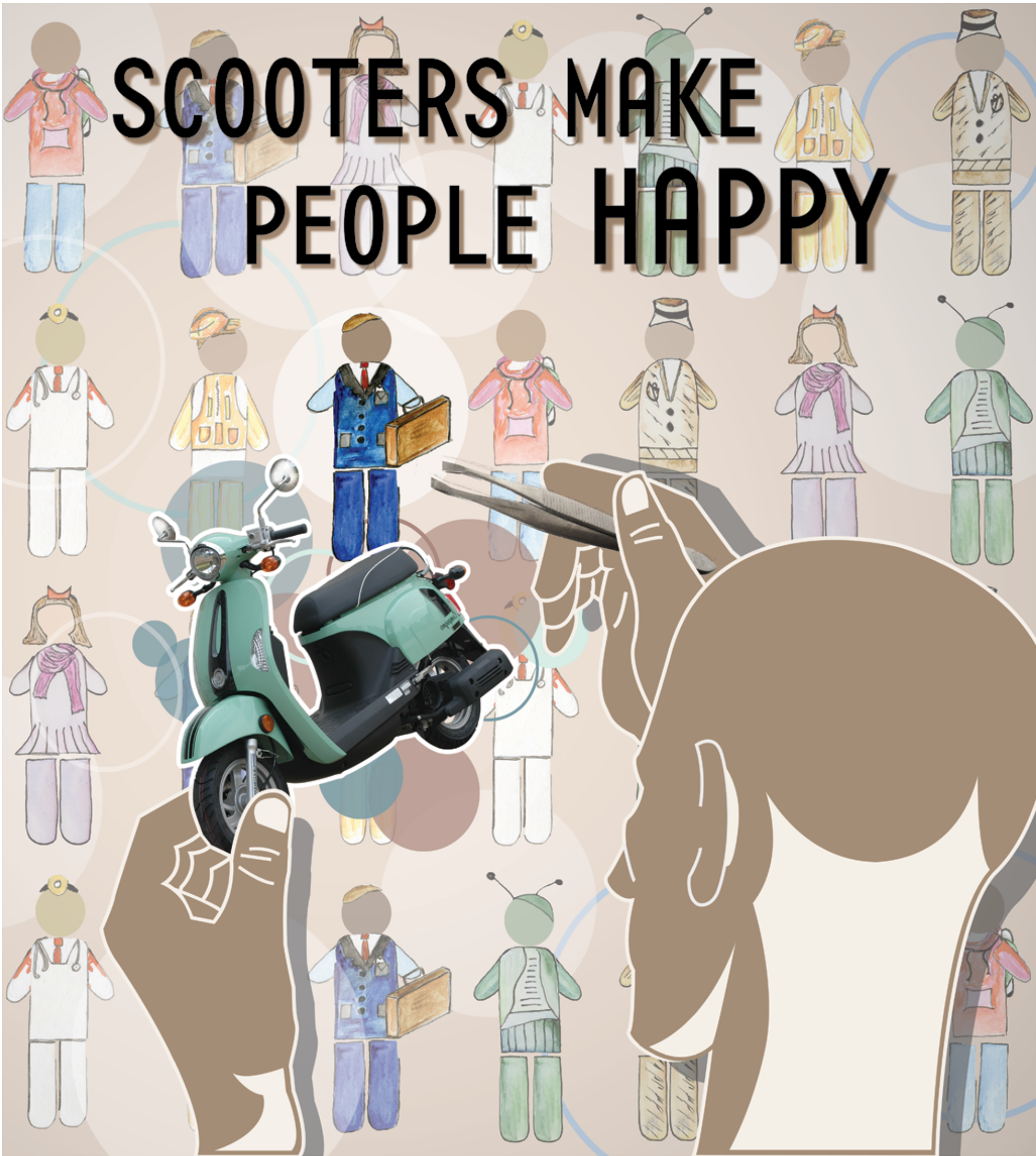
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A few of the faster machines on the salt flats at Speed Week 2017.

Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba

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