

NORCAL NEWS



Ride to Camp

Camp to Ride

February 2024



Photo Credit: Richard Breininger - San Jose BMW

BMW MOTORCYCLE CLUB OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA



LOOKING FOR THAT NEW CLUB TOUR CAPTAIN, IS IT YOU?

Dear Club Members -

I hope my message this month finds you well and filled with the thrill for the open road. As we roll into the the first quarter of 2024 we are seeking a dedicated and enthusiastic individual to step into the role as Tour Captain.

The position is crucial to the success of our club's events and rideouts as it ensures that our tours run smoothly, safely, and provide an unforgettable experience for our members.

As the Tour Captain, you will own the responsibility for:

Route Planning: Have you wanted to take the team on that special ride, well as Tour Captain, you'll be the one that owns and devises new exciting and scenic routes for our club rides while taking into consideration the preferences of skill levels and our diverse membership.

Safety Coordination: Prioritize and enforce safety measures during rides, including communication within the group, adherence to traffic rules, and emergency response coordination.



You Lead/Come
Arm extended upward 45°,
palm forward pointing with
index finger, swing in arc
from back to front

President's Column



Event Coordination: Collaborate with other club leaders to organize and execute various events, ensuring that they align with the club's values and objectives.

Communication: Act as a liaison between club members, providing essential information about upcoming rides, events, and any changes to the schedule.

Positive Leadership: Inspire a sense of camaraderie among members, fostering a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere within the club.

Here is what you need:

- A passion for creating memorable experiences for our fellow club members
- A knowledge of safe riding practices and of the group dynamics
- Strong organizational skills
- To be an active and engaged member of NorCal BMW Club

How to Apply:

If you are ready to take on the challenge and help lead the club in to new horizons, please submit a brief statement of interest to president@bmwnorcal.org. In your statement, share your vision for enhancing our club's touring experience and any relevant experience you bring to the role.

We look forward to reviewing your application and selecting a passionate individual to become our Tour Captain. Let's make our rides even more legendary together!

Tresha Holloway, President



Membership Anniversaries

5 Years

Dane Faber



Hazard in Roadway

On the left, point with left hand; on the right, point with right foot.

Editor's Corner



@thebritnickd

This month has already been a successful biking related 2024 for me.

I've cleaned up the nicks, repaired the cracks, smoothed out the scratches and repainted the fairings on my 22yr old Triumph Speed Triple, I got a replacement engine for my 44yr old Suzuki 250, I booked myself onto the BMW US Rider Academy course in South Carolina that our fantastic Safety Director, Delf, arranged..... and I finally bought some new boots.

In this newsletter we have another mix of articles including a quick write up of the Clear Lake trip and some notices highlighting a few upcoming member adventures. Our historian takes another look BMW's rich history and Delf brings us another educational article to help us grow as safe riders.

Plus find out in this issue if you are the lucky winner of the fantastic Sena 50S intercom unit worth nearly \$500!

This month the board also held its first meeting in preparation for the much anticipated 49er rally held over the May 24-26 weekend at the Mariposa fairground. The 49er rally, this year headed up by Kevin Coleman, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022 making this its 52nd year—expect to read more about the even in next months edition but in the interim remember to save the date in your calendars today!



Nick Dutton



"I see by your clothing that you are a motorcyclist."

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Clear Lake, California



Lake County Fast Facts

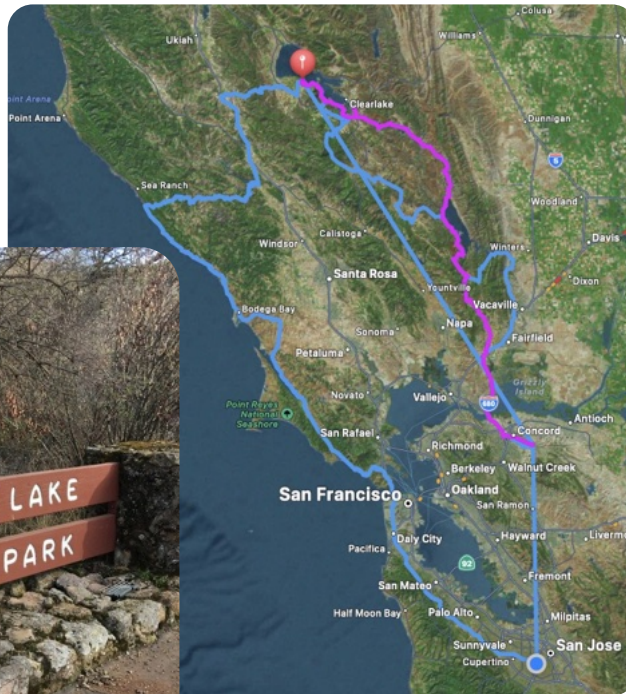
- Typically 265 clear/partly clear skies annually
- Certified cleanest air in California
- Clear Lake
 - est. 2.5 million years old
 - Largest natural freshwater lake in California
 - 63 sq miles of surface area
 - 100 miles of shoreline
 - Ave depth 28ft
 - More fish per acre than any other lake in the country

Stretching along the eastern shore of Clear Lake from Cache Creek to beyond Monitor Point, the City of Clearlake was incorporated in 1980. Known as "the Highlands" to longtime residents, the city meanders over hills throughout its 10.5 square miles. Development of the area began in 1922, with walnut orchards a common sight. Some of those original orchards remain today in the Burns Valley area. The city, with a growing population now over 15,000 prides itself as a tourist destination with small-town charm.

The Clear Lake ride out was the start of the 2024 riding season for many of the members and what made this ride so special is it had a little bit of everything for everyone. Did it rain, barely, but was it dry enough to ride at 'progressive speed', certainly. Was it wet enough to make GS routes fun for those that want to explore alternative routes, you bet....

Just after the bridge at Pope Creek, much of the NorCal pack took a break in the car park before heading off down Pope Canyon Road. A small pack however, felt we'd done that route one too many times, so threw their chips out on the Craps table to see where Berryessa Knoxville Road would take them, and what a fantastic decision that led to be. Clues to the adventure came when passing the 'No low vehicles', and the 'Prone to flooding' signs. These two signs certainly meant what they said even if the number of bullet holes in them spelt a very different message.

The quality of the road diminished fast, and those progressive speeds I mentioned earlier no longer existed as much of the 'road' was being reclaimed by nature. The local creeks and streams didn't flow through man-made tunnels under the road but instead flowed over the road, each time adding layers of sticky mud to the old iron horse but were the riders worried by this?



Not by the growing number of grins found through the cracks in the riders visor and this dirty fun carried on for many miles until we reached McLaughlin Mine and Quarry.

Less than a mile after McLaughlin's entrance we passed through a tunnel and celebrated our achievements with a chorus of tunnel echo's courtesy of our horns and exhausts. The other side of the tunnel did not disappoint either as the road quality changed completely with the some of the best quality tarmac we had seen all day. Throughout this stretch of tarmac we didn't see another car or bike, for miles, we owned it. Then to top it off we had endless views of mountains, gullies and trees for as far as the eye could see.

The road, continued on to the small town of Lower Lake where we picked up our lunch and camp ground groceries (beer). We had initially planned to re-join the original route at Seigler Canyon Road but we instead carried on the 29 where we tested our luck one more time with a right turn onto Point Lakeview Road which took us along the scenic shoreline of Clearlake all the way to camp.

Our route deviation was certainly one of the more luckier finds, and one we plan to ride again.

The ride brought out little pack ever closer, so much so that the very next day we went the long way back to the bay area via the coast at Salt Point and Hwy 1.

We started our Sunday ride at 1020hrs and didn't get back into the San Jose region until 2035hrs some 10hrs later....

Nick Dutton



2023 Winners of Stuff



The SENA SWEEPSTAKES

Since the **November issue** the NorCal BMW club Newsletter and in collaboration with **Sena**, a leading manufacturer of motorcycle communications systems, have been running a free-to-enter sweepstakes for the fantastic Sena 50S Motorcycle Intercom System

worth over **\$500**

Sena's 50S Mesh Communication Headset, is Sena's premium communication system and boasts the following features:

- Premium Speakers & Microphone with SOUND BY Harman Kardon
- One-Click-to-Connect Mesh Intercom
- Robust Reliability
- Bluetooth 5 enabled
- A tries-and-tested glove friendly jog dial design
- Voice-activated digital assistant access ("Hey Google"/"Hey Siri")
- Fast Charging, 20 minutes of charging equals up to 2 hours Mesh or Bluetooth intercom
- Automatic firmware updates via the included Wi-Fi Adapter



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ADVANCED NOISE CONTROL™



MULTI-LANGUAGE VOICE COMMANDS

Steven Kesinger

Winner of the fantastic NorCal BMW / Sena 50S exclusive Sweepstake

Sena Runner-Up T-Shirt Winners
Chris Weld, Perry Chia, Chris Beeson

The 2023 BENT ROD Award

The 2023 Bent Rod Award winner was announced at the December Holiday Party. This year's winner, chosen from among several deserving entries, is Mini McMahon. The award honors Mini's persistence in tuning out her husband's entreaties to slow down as she sped towards a minefield of potholes and broken pavement until... well you'll never guess.

Sadly, Mini called in sick with covid only hours before the Holiday Party, so her roasting has been deferred until the Death Valley campout. Another reason to come to that fantastic ride and campout, drink some beer and start some hootin' and hollerin'. Don't miss it!



Mini McMahon

2023 Bent Rod Award Winner

Bent Rod has gotten a Performance Upgrade

The Bent Rod Perpetual Trophy just got better! Alan Huntzinger added a high compression piston to complement the (bent) connecting rod, giving the Perpetual Trophy some serious horsepower gains.

True, the piston has seen better days, but Alan says the imperfections can be buffed out. Which is not a bad metaphor for some of the Trophy winners.

Trivia challenge: Kicking off the 2024 prize portfolio, the first Club member to correctly identify the piston will win a fantastic prize. Identification may be by part number, engine type, typical model installation or any other BS that you think might pass muster with the judges – (they don't know what this thing is either). Creative stories leaning heavily into historical fiction will be given priority. Send your entries to secretary@bmwnorcal.org.



By Nick Dutton

A 'Scenic' look at Apple CarPlay

Over the years we have all used different methods that help us get from A to B. Many of us will remember the paper map tucked behind the passenger seat in our cars. This transitioned to turn-by-turn instructions we downloaded from MapQuest. Then we moved to a solution from Google Maps and Waze, and more recently Apple Maps. It seems getting from A to B has been one of the most turbulent evolutions we have come to experience. As a biker, we have taped instructions to our tanks, stuffed them into a transparent pouch on top of our tank bags, leveraged our phones with spoken commands sent to our Sena headsets, or even come to love our Navigator GPS products.... OK, so that last one may not be exactly true.

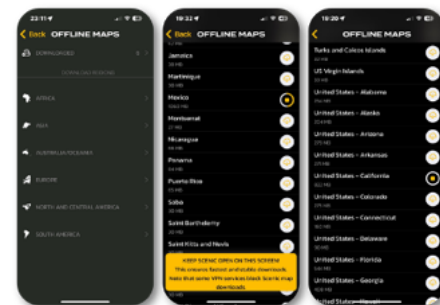
The automotive vendors, it doesn't matter which one, they never seem to get the whole navigation thing right. Over time, nearly all of us have instead bolted our phones to some part of the car or motorcycle because the apps and their interface just seemed to be better. The big phone guys have also seemed to come to this same conclusion and have taken the steps to make this approach a little more standard, Google with their Android Auto and Apple with their Apple CarPlay products.

From an apps standpoint, we, the biker community, have managed to drive a market based on our unique nuances. Bikers have placed a novel set of demands on the app developers and now we can pick roads based on their curviness, we can select route to a destination only 25 miles away that somehow seems to take all day to ride even while at 'progressive' speeds. Once we find that special route we then seem to want to share it with the rest of our two-wheeled community, all of whom appreciate it like a scroll with magical powers....

Apple Carplay and Android Auto then found their way on to the motorcycle and just made it all so much better.

I've played with a number of these biker apps, and they all have their pros and cons. My personal favourite however became an app called Scenic. Scenic was an app that saw me through the full 2023 Range of Light route and provided the full tracking information that you saw on the cover of the October issue of this very newsletter.

Scenic, is designed to help you plan, navigate, track, record, share, and organize your motorcycle adventures. It supports both online and offline maps so even when that cellphone coverage wains as it does on those camping adventures, you are never without a map. Scenic also maintains a huge library of beautiful and 'scenic' routes that turn that ride into a memory.



Over November/December, I was provided an early access sneak preview of the new version of Scenic, now released to the Apple App Store (Google Play coming a little later in the year), and here is what I got to see.

The app maintains all the key features I came to love and depend upon in the proceeding versions, but the app brought a little more polish to the GUI (Graphical User Interface) including:

Map Layers

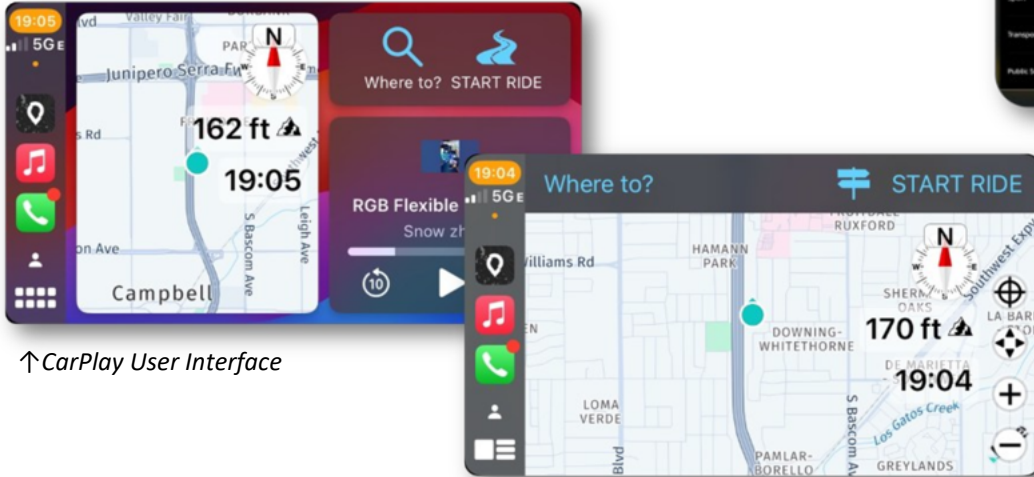
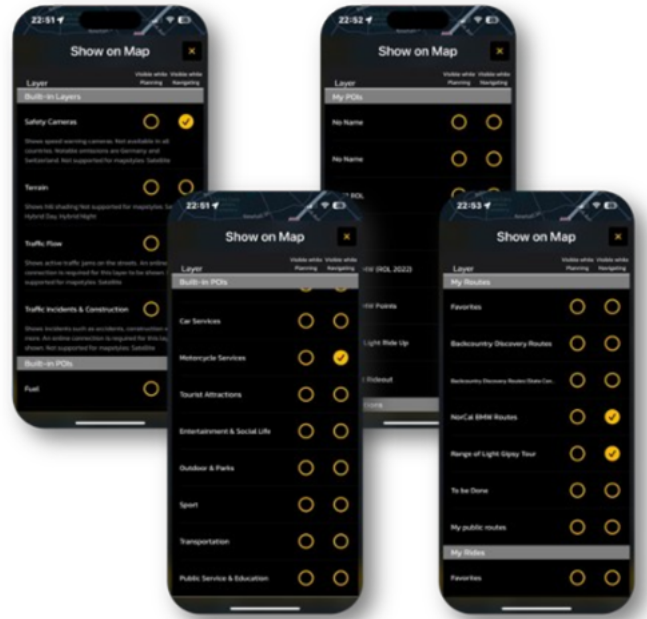
You can now turn various layers for maps on or off, such as safety cameras, terrain, traffic flow, and traffic accidents. Layers can be turned on or off depending on whether you're planning the route or riding the route.

POI (Points of Interest)

The control over Points of Interest (POI) has been made a lot easier letting you customize the map based on the ride requirement whether that be based on social rides, rally adventures, or the things that are simply important to you.

Beauty Route

The app already allows you to select fast, short, alternative, fast curvy, curvy, and extra curvy but now introduces 'beauty'. The beauty selection uses Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI/ML) to analyze thousands of street-view photographs to create a truly scenic route.

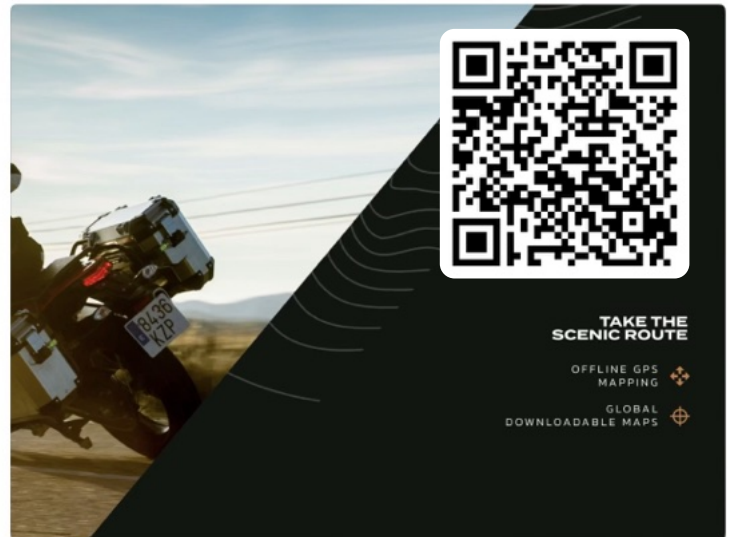
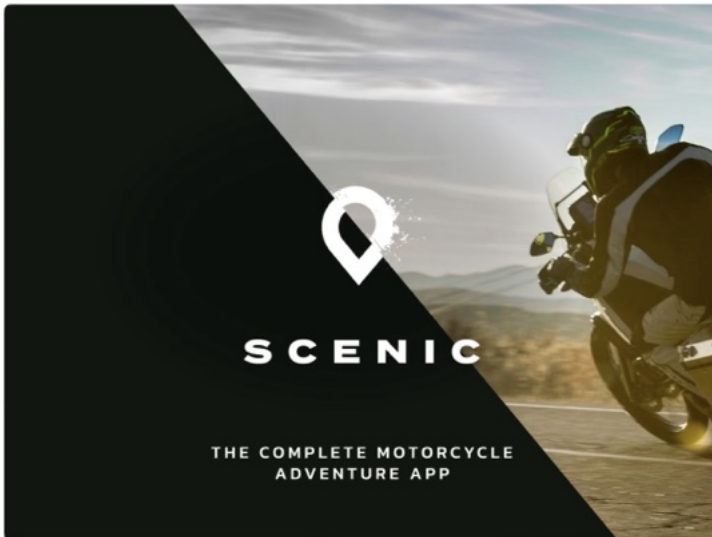


↑ CarPlay User Interface

With the route selected, the Carplay interface becomes a tool of choice as the higher resolution display removes the pixelations that are common on many older GPS units, but the simple interface allows you to see your route, control your music, answer/make calls and you're your text messages being read back to you.

Preparation is a key part of getting the most out of a ride, Scenic provides everything from a power planner to GPX import tools. It also includes integrations to several additional 3rd party route planning tools. Once to have your route in place you can save it to your phone, the cloud and even forward it on to a friend.

Post-ride, then there's always the ride summaries to discuss around the campfire.... Speeds, elevations – even photos taken along the way.



100 YEARS



1923: R32
The first BMW Motorcycle



1935: R12/R17
First hydraulic telescopic fork on a motorcycle series



1941: R24
The first post-war BMW Motorcycle



1952: R68
The '100-mile racer'



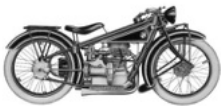
1960: R69S
One of the fastest motorcycles of its time



1970: R90S
The first superbike



1925: R39
The first BMW Single Cylinder



1936: R5
The first BMW motorcycle with foot-operated gearbox



1950: R51/2
The first BMW motorcycle with rear suspension



1955: R69
A new innovative chassis



1969: R75/5
A complete redesign on the Boxer engine and chassis



First ever p...
wi...





BMW MOTORRAD



ike by BMW



1980: R80 G/S
BMW's first ever enduro motorcycle



1993: F650
First single cylinder since 1966 & first chain driven BMW



2006: F800 S
First production 2-cylinder inline engine



2011: K1600 GT/GTL
First inline BMW 6-cylinder engine



1976: R100 RS
roduction bike
th a full-fairing



1988: K100
First motorcycle with ABS



1993: R1100 RS
First of the 4-valve Boxers



2009: S1000 RR
BMW's redefinition of the superbike



2014: C evolution
BMW's production vehicle



1917



1933



1953



1963



1997



2020





A Tale of Two Rallies

part One

And some great riding in-between

As you start your ride planning for 2024, you'll notice that there are a lot of great rallies here in the West, and perfectly lined up to make for a great motorcycle trip.

Starting with our very own 49er rally, and with the 2024 BMW MOA National Rally, there is a major BMW rally and meetup pretty much every weekend. The large distances here in the West are significant and simply attending one of the rallies alone can provide great memories but if you can line the rallies up, the miles of fun will ratchet up substantially....

To inspire and show you how I lined up some rallies, here is how I did it in August of 2023.



In 2003 I first attended the Stanley Stomp in Idaho, and then on to the Beartooth Rendezvous come the following weekend.

It started on an early Wednesday afternoon with a quick trip to meet up with Barbara Schulze for a ride over Carson Pass into Nevada and onto highways 50 and 80 to our Hotel in Winnemucca.

An early start on Thursday led us straight up Hwy 95 through the beautiful Jordan Valley stopping only for burgers in Rome and for the traffic mess between the Boise area & Hwy 55. Even though Hwy 55 is a major road, it earns the G3 rating with Butler maps. But from here the ride got even better. Turning east onto the Wildlife Canyon Scenic Byway (FR24), which has a sweet G1 rating, we went along the Payette River between the towns of Banks and Crouch. This was then fol-



G1 Rides (Gold)

The most dramatic & exciting paved road segments featuring steep climbs, tight switchbacks, deep canyons and million dollar views.

G2 Rides (Silver)

Just a notch below G1, no stoplights or shopping malls here. G2 roads flow energetically from corner to corner gently bobbing and weaving. They meander past lakes and criss cross forests.

G3 Rides (Bronze)

G3 is not your average road. Although these stretches of tarmac require the fewest criteria to make our list, don't be fooled...G3 roads are twisty and exciting.

lowed by another super twisty, and beautiful G1 segment along the Banks-Lowman Road. Going on from Lowman it was only another 20 miles on Hwy 21 to the turnoff for the last 7 miles off unpaved road to Grandjean and the Stanley Stomp. There, after a long day riding, we were happy to be reunited with our friends from the spring trip to the Copper Canyon: Kurt and Judie.

The Stanley Stomp is an old-fashioned rally. Registration opens sometime in January on the website of the BMW Club of Idaho (<https://www.idahobmwriders.org>). You register by sending a check. If the check is cashed, you are registered. No further communication. Attendance is limited to 100 riders and, because of the remote location, reservations are mandatory - no ride-ins are allowed. The rally is set in a spectacular mountain meadow with a river and hot springs close by. Continental breakfasts and full dinners are provided Thursday evening through Sunday morning. The meals were some of the best rally foods I ever enjoyed: Brats, Steaks, Hamburgers, and hearty breakfasts. The rally has a very low-key, family vibe, where everyone is super friendly and pitches in. The rides in the area are spectacular: both paved and unpaved routes lead through amazing landscapes.

The Friday was spent recovering from the two previous days of hard riding by enjoying the local hot springs and just hanging out, connecting with other riders.

On Saturday we took the forest road back to the paved ID-21 and rode for 40 miles on great pavement down into the Sawtooth Valley and the major city of Stanley (population 116). From here, Custer Highway (an unpaved road that is graded better than many California Freeways) to the Yankee Ford Gold Dredge (lovingly preserved as a museum by a group of dedicated volunteers) and then the Ghost Town of Custer, an old mining town. We made it back to the Rally just in time for dinner and the closing ceremonies.



All in all, I think the Stanley Stomp is my favorite rally, intimate and reduced to the basics. Just a bunch of motorcycle riders who love to ride in beautiful places and spend time on a campfire telling “fisherman’s” lies about their adventures.

On Sunday morning, after the final breakfast at the Stomp, it was time to pack the bikes and ride towards the next part of our Adventure, Section 4 of the Idaho Backcountry Discovery Route, The Magruder Corridor.

To get to Elk City, our starting point, we rode up Hwy 95 North along the Salmon River and one of the most scenic US Highways. Given that it was Sunday, most traffic was going south towards Boise, and we had a great ride. In Grangeville, we turned east onto Mt Idaho Grade Road and the ID-14, two more G1 roads with great twisted tarmac that slice through the dense pine trees and steep granite walls of the Nez Perce National Forest.

Elk City is another metropolis with a population of 170. It has a gas station (regular only) with a café, a general store, a couple of restaurants (closed on Sunday nights), a campground, and a hotel. The Elk City Hotel looks scary from the outside, but the inside lobby and the rooms are quite nice and very affordable!

As all the restaurants were closed, we went to Post 8311 of the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) which is also the most remote VFW post in the nation and the hot spot for fun in Elk City! You do not have to be a veteran to visit. The folks there are happy to share their tons of local knowledge and they are very friendly towards motorcycle riders. The menu at the VFW post is somewhat limited, but the food is great, the beer is cold, and they stay open until there is no more business.

After a leisurely breakfast and some shopping for supplies at the General store, we finally hit the Magruder Corridor around 11:00 on Monday morning.

The Magruder Corridor (Section 4 of the Idaho Backcountry Discovery Route) is a historic, 101-mile, mostly unimproved road that winds through a vast undeveloped area, offering solitude and pristine beauty as well as expansive mountain views. The corridor was created in 1980 leaving a unique road that enables a traveler to drive between two wildernesses: the 1.2 million-acre Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness to the north, and the 2.3-million-acre Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness to the South.

“This is the Idaho you always dreamed about, moose, wolves, elk, and dramatic vistas. The road surface itself is not particularly challenging in dry conditions: however, there are no services for over 120 miles and very few people around for help.”

Butler Maps

The ride started out on well-graded forest roads offering easy riding with amazing views. At the Dry Saddle Trailhead, we chatted with a Jeep driver coming the other way. He had some advice “I hope you enjoyed your ride up to here, because this is where the s#%t starts”.

He was right....

It never got very technical: there was no deep sand or mud, no crazy boulders but the easy cruising had ended. There were lots of altitude changes and just enough sand with hidden rocks in the corners to keep things interesting. The seemingly endless Rock gardens and baby heads required constant concentration.

It was also very hot, even at 8000 ft and I didn’t bring enough water, so I was tiring quickly.

I had no good reason for dropping the bike the first time: just a lack of concentration, The second time a bunch of baby beads chased me into a rut toward a boulder that ripped off my side stand extender. We enjoyed the challenges, but by mid-afternoon, we were looking forward to the campsite. The Observation Point campsite is at more than 8000ft with great views and has the best restroom on the Magruder. We closed the day with a campfire and a great dinner of grilled chicken and vegetables. Despite the high altitude, the night was relatively mild, not even dew on the tents in the morning.



On Tuesday, we got an early start, and the ride certainly seemed a lot easier. In no time we were at the Magruder Crossing where the 1863 infamous massacre took place, and from there... it was all downhill.

When we arrived at the bridge, we knew that the hard riding was over. The road to the ranger station was well-graded and the Nez Perce Pass is paved. A couple more miles on well-graded roads and we were proud to have finished the ride over the Magruder Corridor.

We stopped in Darby to fuel up the bikes and rehydrate. A lot of water and Gatorade was consumed. biggest tourist attraction is the Chief Joseph Ranch, which was the filming location of the “Yellowstone” drama – we didn’t stop to see it.

By mid-afternoon, we made it to Corvallis and the home of Carol, a friend of Kurt whom we had met at the Stanley Stomp. She opened her home to this group of exhausted riders, offering us showers, great homemade pizza, and some well-earned ‘adult-beverages’. After a good night sleep, we were ready for the next part of the adventure: Glacier National Park, the Road to the Sun and on the to Beartooth Rendezvous at Red Lodge, Montana.

To be continued...

Delf Hedde





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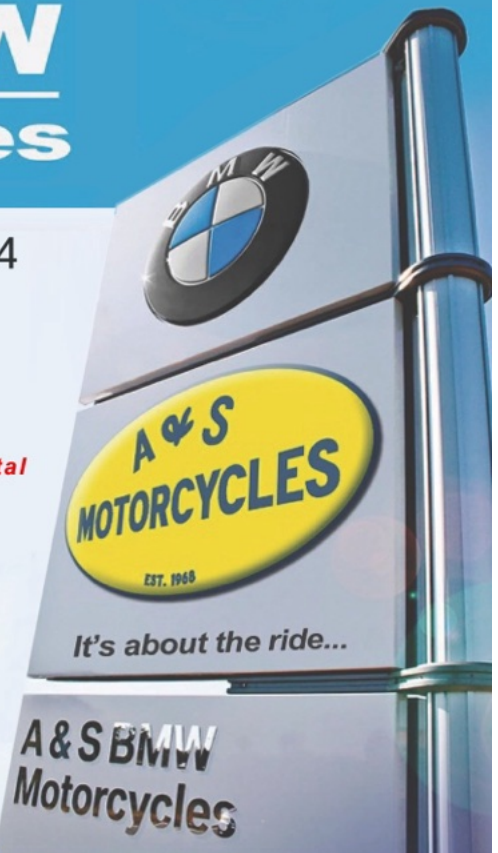
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SCOTLAND – CASTLES, KILTS AND WHISKY

This eleven-day tour (*June 17-27, 2024*) starts and ends in the center of Scotland’s stunning capital city, Edinburgh. Our tour includes great riding on many narrow, winding roads through farmland, beautiful coastal roads, and over the rolling long green hills of this picturesque country.

Scotland is famous for its historical castles and fine whisky. We will get to visit and stay at some of these fine, monumental, and historical buildings as well as visit some of the famous whisky distilleries.

Join our tour which includes highlights including stays at historical castles, riding some of the best motorcycle roads in Scotland, two nights in the popular seaside town

of Oban, a chance to sample some of Scotland’s finest whiskies, and a ride to the Northern Tip of Britain.

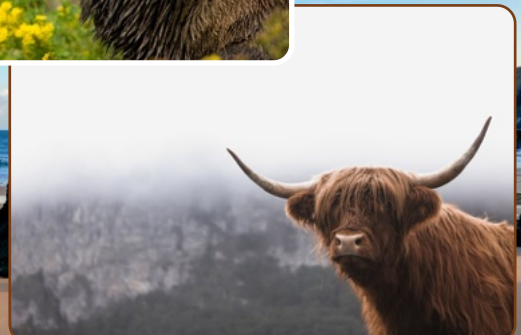


Visit <https://www.ayresadventures.com/uk-tour/> for additional information and sign-up info. Mention Russ Drake and he will buy the first shot of Scotch!

Questions?

Call Russ: +1 (510) 427-3309
twobeemers@aol.com

SCOTLAND




Nuggets from the Historian's Archive

It's the late 1970s and BMW is noticing the demand for modern, sophisticated, high horsepower and most important...more reliable, motorcycles, which the Japanese has been willing and able to supply. While BMW's industry leading car division is producing the "Ultimate Driving Machine" they had left their 2-wheeled faction in the dust. For ze' Germans, this simply will not do.

Since introducing their first motorcycle-the R32, in 1923, the BMW's iconic air-cooled twin cylinder, boxer engine was able to propel riders and the Motorrad division of BMW to great success; winning over many loyal followers in the process. This unique, yet old-school, engine architecture (and subsequent performance figures) was quickly being surpassed by competitors and something had to be done. Enter: BMW's all new 'K-Bike'!



The first iteration of K-Bike was the 1983 K100 and was propelled by a 987cc liquid cooled, 4 cylinder Renault engine plucked from the Peugeot 104 city car. BMW laid this engine flat in the frame with the crankshaft on the right, running parallel to the center line of the frame. BMW's 'Flying Brick' is born. 

This layout, for which BMW submitted a patent (BMW's 'Compact Drive'), was well suited to BMW's traditional shaft drive delivery, needing only one 90° bevel gear to transmit power to the rear wheel. BMW was willing to give up the Flat Twin, but they would be damned before letting go of their driveshafts! Plus, shaft-drive was a time-honored, if not heavy, low maintenance design and catered to those touring long distances, or to those who just like shafts. The K also incorporated industry leading technologies such as ABS, Bosch fuel injection system (from their 3 series car), electronic cruise control and electronic suspension adjustment. If that wasn't enough doodads, the K1200 LT offered accoutrements like a tape deck, AM/FM radio, 6-disc CD changer, CB radio and even a reverse gear.

The K was reliable, with many calling it 'A Million Kilometre Machine'.

It evolved over the years. 1990 saw the better breathing 32-valve K100 RS and in 2004, BMW gave up the longitudinally mounted flat-4 in favor of a more compact transvers mounted slant-4 configuration. This allowed for a shorter wheelbase and, coupled with BMW's latest Duolever front suspension, more nimble handling. Power increased as well to 167hp.



Today, BMW still offers the K-bike. A 1600cc inline 6-cylinder touring behemoth capable of propelling you and your deepest desires, into oblivion.

The K-bikes deliver. Ask me how I know.

Chris King



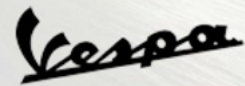
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Delf's Safety Column



Riding Curves – The Basics

Last month I wrote about motorcycle accidents that included two bikes, or a bike and a car. But the majority of motorcycle accidents are single vehicle accidents. In most cases excessive speed is quoted as the reason for the crash. But if we look a little bit deeper it becomes obvious, that the **most common reason for solo accidents in curves is – no, not too high a speed, but a lack of riding skills.** In other words, the selected pace just didn't match the capabilities of the rider.

Very few motorcyclists crash losing traction because of too high speed in a turn. Modern tires are amazing! Even with my knobbies, I start scrapping hard parts long before the tires reach their limit of traction. Riders don't just slide out in a turn. Because of the lack of riding technique, they are more likely to go straight into the ditch or into incoming traffic.

You all remember the basic survival skills from when you learned to ride: active vision, counter-steering, not being afraid of lean angle, and good line selection.

Active vision: Do not just look at the road in front of your wheel! Don't get target fixated! Remember that the bike will follow your eyes! Scan and sweep!

Counter-steering: Motorcyclists initiate a turn by pushing forward on the inside handlebar. Yes, the bike is briefly steered in the "wrong direction", That's just physics. However, this is the only steering technique that will guarantee that the motorcycle always steers precisely under control at road speeds.

Lean Angle: Single tracked vehicles need to lean to turn. That's just physics again. In general terms, the greater the lean angle, the tighter a radius can be negotiated at a given speed. Or the greater the lean angle, the faster a given radius can be ridden.

Line selection is a huge topic on itself. I'll expand a bit on that in the future. For starters: just following the line markers painted on the road is not a good strategy for motorcyclists.

You would think, everyone understands that a collision with oncoming traffic can pretty much ruin your day. But it's amazing, how every time I am having fun on a popular windy road (Skyline Boulevard is a great example) the same thing happens

again and again: I ride a right-hand turn and a

coming the other way is getting dangerously close to me. Most of the time, they are not even riding a recognizable line in their left turn. They just ride with the tires close to the Center line or in the middle of the road – not realizing that half their bike and upper body lean into incoming traffic.

When I try to ride a clean (outside – inside- outside) right turn, it gets tight. If I don't want their head hitting my fork, the only thing I can do, is tighten my turn and to evade to the right. Usually not a hard thing to do, but annoying, as it disrupts my flow.

It gets more exciting, when it's not a narrow motorcycle coming their way, but a car or even a bus.

The oncoming motorcyclist runs out of choices quickly. Once too far to the inside, the rider can only "open up", that means, now their line of travel leads towards the outside edge of the curve. If their speed was suitable for their initial, wider turn, things will get tight when they have to get back into the turn radius of the curve.



In Europe these kind of motorcycle accidents became so prevalent, that in Austria, Slovenia, Luxembourg and Germany, now they have lane markings, just to keep motorcyclists away from the center line and oncoming traffic. Don't expect that kind of assistance here, anytime soon!

As line selection is such a crucial skill, I'll spend some more time on it next month.

As always: If you'd like to discuss or argue, I am always happy to talk about motorcycle safety. You can find me at most campouts, or at safetydirector@bmwnorcal.org.



Delf Hedde

Upcoming Events

Monthly Board of Director Meetings—February

06 Feb 2024 : Online

Virtual link sent upon request, email Secretary@bmwnorcal.org

February 2024 Club Meeting in Fremont Peak

24 - 25 Feb 2024

10700 San Juan Canyon Rd, San Juan Bautista, CA 95045

Registration required

Monthly Board of Director Meetings—March

05 Mar 2024 : Online

Virtual link sent upon request, email Secretary@bmwnorcal.org

March 2024 Club Meeting in Death Valley

21 - 25 Mar 2024

Furance Creek Campground.

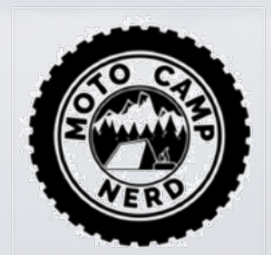
Registration required

For more information visit the club website: <https://www.bmwnorcal.org/Events>

The **BMW Motorcycle Club of Northern California** has been riding and camping since 1965! Join us on the last weekend of each month on our long tour, General Member Meeting, and overnight campout somewhere in the greater Northern California and Nevada areas. Membership is not required to participate

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