

FEBRUARY 2023

NORCAL NEWS



Ride to Camp

Camp to Ride



BMW MOTORCYCLE CLUB OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

PRESIDENTS COLUMN

The Club is in full swing after a wet January, and we are busy planning the remainder of the year. I had to skip the January Campout due to family commitments, but I heard it was an outstanding ride and campsite with excellent weather. I look forward to seeing everyone at our February meeting at Clearlake State Park. Let's hope the weather cooperates. The last time we were at Clear Lake, it was a large turnout right before the Covid Shutdown! I am not expecting any pandemics this time. Big thanks to Richard Leavy, who offered to drive and supply plenty of firewood and malty beverages.

The most significant effort right now is the 49er, with Mark Rodda stepping up again to lead the charge with this year's Rally that will be back at Mariposa in 2023. We have lots of energy around the Rally, but of course, are always looking for fresh ideas along with the volunteers to implement, so if you are interested in giving back to our wonderful riding community, drop an email to Mark at 49erchair@bmwnorcal.org! Look for registration to open up soon.

We are bringing back our Second Sunday Breakfast for members and guests with a slight twist. With the challenge and cost of obtaining insurance for club events, we are changing the event's format to just a breakfast with no organized club ride. Attendees can head out on their own routes with other members or guests or agree upon a destination. Our breakfast location will generally provide easy access to the best roads the Bay Area offers. Also, consider using our [club forum](#) to communicate with other riders and share ideas about routes or destinations.

We are implementing a no-show fee for Members who register for our monthly campouts and do not attend that will be applied to campouts that reach capacity and have a waitlist. We have experienced a significant number of no-shows at events which results in people being put on waitlists unnecessarily, increases cost when we reserve additional sites and limits the population of potential campsites. As an example, our January campout had 50 registrants and 15+ waitlisted. After securing two other individual sites for the potential overflow, less than 30 people camped! While we have been asking people to cancel their reservations if they can no longer attend, this has not resulted in the desired outcome.

The Board considered reinstating camping fees for members but decided to implement a no-show fee instead. This approach is straightforward for us to manage, does not impact any member who actually attends the campout, and should significantly reduce the number of signups to "hold" a spot and enable us to accommodate everyone who plans to attend. If a member signs up for a campout but does not check in with the Vice President or his Designee at the campground, we will charge a \$25.00 no-show fee. All members can [self-cancel](#) their registrations up to 7 days in advance. After that, you will need to contact the tour captain to cancel with a good reason. It is the member's responsibility to check in with the VP at the campground. The no-show fee only applies to members as guests already pay a guest fee and forfeit their registration if they are no-shows. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support with this new policy that will enable us to serve our members better.

Ride Safe

Kevin Coleman President

Front Cover - Photograph taken by Ken Ellis at the 2022 race meeting. Oliver's Mount, Scarborough, England.

EDITORS CORNER

My brother Ken lives in Yorkshire, a county in the North of England. His hobbies for the last 40 years have been photography and road racing (both cars and motorcycles) and he focuses on combining the two. I recently informed him I was editing this newsletter and provided him with a link to past issues. Having looked at a few he kindly offered to write an article about Oliver's Mount race course, and provide me with some pictures he had taken last year meeting. Oliver's Mount is a very special place which has not changed since the 1960's when I visited. He sent me about 40 pictures of very high quality which could easily be mistaken for professional, but Ken assures me this is the first time any of his photos have been published. I picked the ones that illustrates the track's unique quality – placing the viewing public feet away from 160mph motorcycles. If you are planning a trip to England, check out the race schedule. I also included a drawing of very special 1929 AJS which is on display at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham, England. England has lots of things to do and many places to visit.

Delf Hedde, this month wearing his Safety Directors' hat, submitted an article reviewing the current state of art with respect to crash detection and emergency notifications. As usual well researched, well written and informative.

The second and concluding part of Russ Drake's Trans-American Trail adventure is included. Although this adventure dates back to 2009 I am sure the majority of current membership have never read it. I love the picture of the red rock road.

Thanks to Ravi Verma for the January camp out pictures and Chris King for his historian's report.

As usual I end with a plea for content. Make life easier for me and far more interesting for the readers

John Ellis

Special offer from the BMW Motorcycle Owners of America

If you own a BMW motorcycle, it makes a lot of sense to become a member of the BMW MOA (BMW Motorcycle Owners of America). There are a lot of benefits:

- A great monthly newsletter (The Owners News)
- Access to Roadside Assistance and Tire replacement programs
- Partner Discounts
- A raised Dollar amount for Paul B Grants (\$250 instead of \$100 for non-members)

If you never have been a member, the MOA has a great offer for you:

The MOA is offering new, never members one year of FREE membership! To take advantage of this offer use the code 50YRSON when prompted. Check it out here

<https://airtable.com/shrPT7yA9hWiUM9XV>

NEW MEMBER THIS MONTH

Please welcome Norcal's newest member
Brandon S Walls

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JANUARY CAMPOUT NAPA BOTHE STATE PARK

The day started cold and foggy but turned into a beautiful spring like day exploring some really great Napa Valley roads. Truly amazing how the club continues to discover new and interesting roads.

The forecast Sunday rain held off long enough to allow everyone to get home in the dry.



Historians Report

From about 6,000 BC, the Koliholmanok ("woods people") lived in the areas now called Calistoga, along Ritchey Creek and south as far as Rutherford.

There was an estimated 2,000 Koliholmanok people before the Europeans came to California. When Spanish settlers arrived, they called the native people "guapo" due to their bravery, daringness, and good looks; In phonetic English, "Guapo" came to be pronounced "Wap-poe", but the tribe called themselves the Onasatis – meaning "the people who speak plainly" or "Outspoken People".

Many people know that Napa Valley region is named after the Napa River which runs through the length of the valley. The Napa River in turn got its name from the indigenous Wappo Indians who lived there.

The word Napa has been translated variously as "grizzly bear," "house," or "Motherland" Of all these definitions there is still disputes as to which was the source, but most believe the Patwin word for napa meaning house is the origin. Interestingly, another Wappo word: Napayoko (na pa yó ko) means madrone berries and they look surprisingly like grape clusters, green in summer and turning to a juicy red in the fall.

In 1839 a settler and fur trapper from Missouri named George Yount, was the first to plant grapes in Napa Valley. You may recognize the name from the culinary gem of a town, Yountville, which was named after him.

In the 1840s, Dr. Edward T. Bale was given 18,000 acres of land through a Mexican land grant. To process grain into meal using water power, he built the nearby Bale Grist Mill, which is now a state historic park, 1.5 miles south of this park.

It wasn't until 1861 that Charles Krug was credited with establishing Napa Valley's first commercial winery. Fast forward 30 years and it exploded to over 140 wineries in operation. Currently, there are over 500 wineries located in Napa Valley. And you know -- its rumored that the Napa Valley cabernet was a favorite of Snow Shoe Thompson...

This campground is home to the Bothe-Napa Valley's visitor center. IT was on the righthand side after the campground entrance booth. The visitor center was originally built as a home for George and Angeline Tucker in 1858. The 1900 acre park ranges in elevation from 300 to 2,000 feet above sea level and contains 10 miles of trails.

The Tucker family graves lie in the park's Pioneer Cemetery.

In more recent history, due to the recent storms Lake Berryessa has risen 20 feet this year. Though according to the gal at the local bar another 27 feet is still needed.

Chris King



NORCAL TECH DAY MARCH 4 , 11AM TO 3PM

Moto Guild has is a great Sponsor of the Club, hosting our monthly Board of Directors meetings, as well as donating the use of their facilities for club members twice a year.

Just in time to get your bike ready for Death Valley, Baja or any other spring rides, Moto Guild is donating the use of two workstations (including lify and tire change machine) for the Club's Tech Day on March 4, 11am to 3pm.

To maintain the good will of the good folks as Motor Guild, we need to make sure that we follow the rules:

1. Board Members or other designated members are responsible for ensuring that all rules are adhered to.
2. Everyone **MUST** complete/sign Moto Guild's liability wavier **BEFORE** using the facility.
3. Be appreciative and respectful! **MOTO GUILD IS DONATING** time and space for this event that it would normally be charging customers for.

SUPPORT MOTO GUILD!

Please **purchase your supplies and parts from Moto Guild**. MG stocks oil, filters, brake fluid and coolant for your bike and will order tires, brakes and any other parts needed.

Moto Guild's pricing is VERY competitive.

Please order in advance, delivery is normally 2 business days for non-stocked items, like brakes and tires.

4. Use of the tire change machine **MUST be supervised by (Moto Guild) or authorized Club Members** at all times.
In order to get authorized, you need to participate in one of their Tire Changing Workshops. These workshops are offered several times each month. Please keep in mind that being authorized does NOT qualify you to train your friends on the machine! If you want to use the machine and are not authorized, find a club member that is.
5. Please do not make a mess and clean up the work area after you have completed your work.
6. Moto Guild must pay state mandated **recycling and disposal fees** for tires and fluids, these fees are passed along to customers:

RECYCLING FEES

TIRES - \$6/tire for tires purchased at MG and \$13/tire for tires purchased elsewhere

OIL, BRAKE FLUID AND COOLANT – no fee if purchased at MG,

\$6 if purchased elsewhere (up to 4 quarts)

7. Moto Guild will be open to paying customers during the Club's event, be courteous and use only the workspaces dedicated to the Club.
8. Tip Moto Guild staff for their help!

Sandwiches will be supplied by Paul Bosco of the famous Lucca Deli.

This is a NorCal Member Only event. Registration Required



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OLIVER'S MOUNT

A BRIEF LOOK AT AN HISTORIC ENGLISH RACING CIRCUIT

There are many purpose built motor-sport tracks in England but only one road racing circuit i.e. racing on actual public roads normally restricted to 30mph. This is at Oliver's Mount, on a hill overlooking the seaside town of Scarborough, North Yorkshire. You'll most likely have heard of the Isle of Man TT, but that is an individual time trial over public roads, whereas this is close motorcycle racing. There are other temporary road racing circuits and races in Ireland but not in England

A brief history

The first motorcycle races at Oliver's Mount were held in 1946 and the layout of the track has barely changed since then. The trees have grown, some straw bales have been changed for more modern crash protection, the tarmac has improved, a chicane installed on the long straight but little else has. There are limited run off areas if mistakes happen, and consequently this is one of the most dangerous forms of motor-sport. Today's riders are well aware of the dangers involved but do it because they love the challenge.

Due to the narrow width of the road, only bikes and sidecars are allowed to race over the circuit, and even then the numbers of riders are limited for each race. However, from a spectators point of view "safely" standing behind a wooden fence or hedge, the spectacle of watching bikes go past a few feet away at speeds up to 160 mph is awesome. With the location being on a hill overlooking the sea, the weather can change and the courage of the riders, in sometimes wet and windy conditions, has to be admired.

In its heyday the world's best motorcycle racers Duke, Surtees, Agostini, Sheene, used to race there, but today it is frequented by road racing specialists who will build their season around the Isle of Man TT and use the events at Oliver's Mount as a pre-season warm up or end of season wind down.

Noise restrictions mean that only a limited number of events can be held and the promoters aim for four two day race meetings and a couple of hill climbs each year.



Recent hiccups

However, that has not been the case over the last few years. In 2017, for the first time in recent memory, there were two crashes which involved injuries to spectators. They were both at the same bend and one was caused by a racing incident and the other when an electric racing bike failed to brake sufficiently going into the bend. Obviously post incident safety assessments were done and it was decided that there needed to be further improvements to safety, restrictions on what was allowed to race (max 600cc current bikes) and restricted spectator access to certain areas. The original promoters, Auto 66 racing, did not have sufficient funds to carry out the required changes and so an alternative promoter was sought.

It took a further twelve months before any progress was made and new promoters were found, but two events were eventually held in 2019 with a plan for four in 2020. However, then Covid struck and National restrictions meant that only one race was held in late 2020. Whilst national Covid restrictions were lifted in 2021 and four meetings were scheduled, only the Spring Cup meeting took place. A detailed inspection by the local authority found that buildings in the paddock area were found to be in a dangerous state and needed to be sorted. It was decided that they needed to be demolished, but various planning approvals and wildlife surveys needed to take place before this could be completed.

Consequently, the delays meant that only one meeting was held in 2022 and that was the Gold Cup meeting in September. Thankfully the weather was good and the crowd was good, so many road racing fans were relieved that racing could resume. The following photos hopefully give you an idea of how the circuit integrates with the landscape.

If you have got to here, first of all well done, and secondly, if your enthusiasm is raised, then I expect the question of whether you should spend the kid's inheritance on a trip to the UK and Oliver's Mount, in particular, may have sprung to mind. Bear in mind the main factor outside of anyone's control is the weather. Being on the coast the weather is changeable and meetings have been canceled or delayed due to sea fret (sea fog), torrential downpours and high winds. Go to the Isle of Man TT or Goodwood, but Oliver's Mount would be highly recommended if a meeting was happening whilst you were visiting the UK!

Further information on the Oliver's Mount web site [Road Racing | Oliver's Mount Racing | Scarborough \(olivermount.com\)](http://RoadRacingOliverMountScarborough.com)

and a search on YouTube to see some of the modern day "gladiators."

Ken Ellis



CRASH DETECTION AND EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION

by Delf Hedde - Safety Director

A few months ago, I wrote an article about motorcycle communication systems. These systems are great, if you get into a situation, where you feel forced to "call in the cavalry". But what if you crash and are unconscious, or otherwise unable to operate your coms device? The SOS Button on your Garmin is a great feature – but it doesn't do you any good, if you can't press it. Fortunately, there are several new devices for that situation.



The BMW Motorrad Emergency Call System: eCALL

This system, which has been available for BMW cars since 1999, automatically contacts the BMW call center instead of only connecting the driver to the local emergency dispatch center.

With the help of the transmitted data, the direction of travel can be determined in addition to the location of the accident, so that even hard-to-find destinations can be reached quickly by the emergency services.

After the call center has been notified, an attempt is made to contact the person concerned. No further information is required from the caller to activate the rescue chain. Numerous uses of the eCALL system in passenger cars have shown that the emergency services can reach the scene of an accident 40 to 50 percent faster with the help of this safety system.



The comprehensive and intelligent sensors for accident detection enable reliable differentiation from non-accidents.

Only information about the time and location of the motorcycle, the chassis number and the user's individual language is then transmitted. The system does not save any further user data. For example, speed recording or a permanent location query do not take place.

The intelligent emergency call takes three scenarios into account:

Scenario 1: Automatic triggering in the case of a bad fall / collision.

The emergency call is automatically triggered without time delay, sending a message to a qualified BMW Call Center. The accident victim/rider is taken care of by the BMW Call Center via audio connection until the emergency service arrives. Help is sent out in any case even if there is no response. A display in the instrument cluster shows that the eCall has been initiated. An acoustic signal is also set off. In this case the rider cannot cancel the emergency call any more.

Scenario 2: Automatic triggering in the case of a minor fall / collision.

In this case the emergency call is only triggered after 25 seconds before sending a message to the BMW Call Center. If no help is necessary after only a non-serious accident, the accident victim/rider has the opportunity of cancelling the emergency call at the press of a button. If he does not cancel, the rescue chain is initiated as in scenario 1. A display in the instrument cluster shows that the eCall has been initiated. An acoustic signal is also set off.

Scenario 3: Manual triggering by pressing a button

In this case the eCall is triggered manually by pressing the SOS button on the right handlebar end, e.g. for calling help for other road users in need. A message is sent to the BMW Call Center and a voice connection is established. A voice connection is mandatory if the eCall was triggered manually before further measures are initiated. Here too, the accident victim/rider is also given the opportunity to cancel the emergency call at the press of a button or by turning off the ignition. The intelligent emergency call can only be triggered manually when the motorcycle is stationary with the ignition on.

This system has been available since 2017 for BMW Motorcycles sold in Europe. Unfortunately, I have found no indication, that it will be available for BMW Motorcycles in the US any time soon.



Apple's Crash Detection and Emergency SOS

The iPhone 14 (and Apple Watch Series 8, SE, and Ultra) has a built-in crash-detection feature that automatically calls 911 if you suddenly stop moving.

The new feature has sensors trained on the impact experienced with simulated car crashes. If the sensors think you've been in an accident, your iPhone will vibrate, prompt you with an audible alert, and then call 911 if you don't dismiss it within 20 seconds. When it calls 911, it plays an audio message that alerts authorities you've been in a crash along with your location.

Emergency calls use a cellular connection or Wi-Fi Calling with an Internet connection from your Apple Watch or iPhone. Crash Detection notifications to emergency services will use the Emergency SOS via satellite system when you're outside of cellular and Wi-Fi coverage.

When a severe car crash is detected, your iPhone or Apple Watch sounds an alarm and displays an alert. If you are able, you can choose to call emergency services or dismiss alert, but if you are unresponsive, the device will automatically call emergency services after a 20-second delay.

The device also sends a message to your Emergency Contacts to share your location and let them know that you've been in a severe crash. In addition to that, it will display a Medical ID slider, so that emergency responders can access your medical information.

While this technology has been developed to detect and deal with car crashes, there already numerous reports about how it worked in Motorcycle crashes and even Skiing accidents.

While I still believe that a dedicated satellite-based system is more robust, the combination of crash detection and automated emergency call is a great step forward.

More information about these systems can be found on the BMW Motorrad Germany and Apple websites.



Wunderlich FLOWJET Windshields

A tall windscreen's primary purpose is to displace air from around the rider and are great in cold and wet weather. However, in summer heat or when riding off road on trails, having a cooling flow of air around your helmet really does improve comfort. Wunderlich has come up with a new series for short windscreens specifically for BMW GSs that are a direct replacement for the original windscreen. They protect your instruments and the laminar design directs air flow away from your body. These screens can be adjusted up and down just like the factory original.



These screens are available for 1200Gs, 1250GS, 750GS and 850GS. Take care when ordering to make sure you are getting the right one for your bike. If you have a late model 1250GS Wunderlich have a range of which are coordinated with the original factory graphics and color schemes such as 40 Years Edition, HP Edition, Limited Edition, and Trophy Edition.

In addition, Wunderlich has a range of side panels (fit the space under the seat) that are color/graphics coordinated with factory designs. Prices vary but a color coordinated FLOWJET screen is priced at \$154.95, and side covers start at \$211.95.

<https://www.wunderlichamerica.com/wunderlich-side-cover-set-29313.html>

<https://www.wunderlichamerica.com/BMW-R1250GS-Graphic-Choices-Windcreens>



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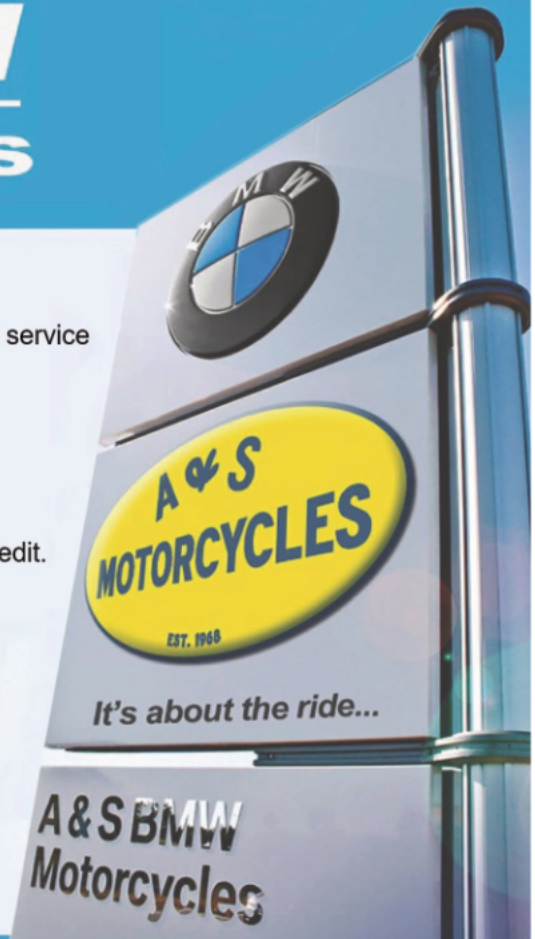
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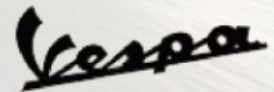
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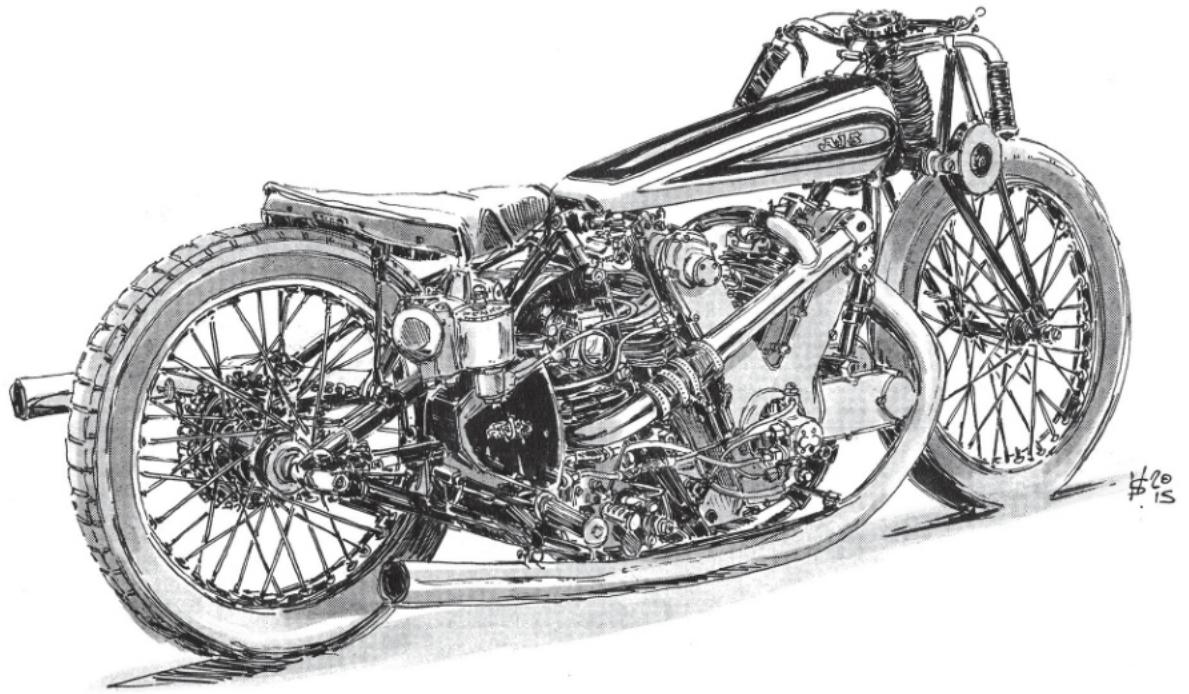
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1929 AJ'S RECORD ATTEMPT MACHINE

In the November 2022 Newsletter I included an article describing BMW World Speed record attempts in by Ernst Henne in the 1930's.

His opposition, at this time, was coming from Britain in the form of a 1929 AJ'S which is shown in its final supercharged form in this superb illustration. The bike is now on display at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham, England. The bike was built with the objective of hitting 150mph, and in 1933 hit 136mph on Southport Sands in Lancashire (North-East England) ridden by a Joe Wright. AJ'S sold the bike



for £85 in 1934 and it eventually ended up in the hands of the famous record breaker Eric Fernihough. Although it was seen at Brooklands in the late 30's there was no more record attempts with this bike.

Eric Fernihough riding a Brough Superior on a straight road in Gyon, south of Budapest in early 1937, took the absolute record from Henne at 169.79mph, but unfortunately was killed on the same road the next year when attempting to beat Henne new time of 173.68mph.

The AJ'S then went to Australia before returning to the National Motorcycle Museum.

India by Motorcycle - Looking for Interested Parties.....

The journey would take us from jungles where the tiger roars, to the Taj Mahal, the symbol of love. We might sleep on the warm sands of beaches on the Arabian Sea and wake up to the cool hills of the Western Ghats Mountain range.

The idea was proposed to me over campfire chats at the Cedar Flats campout. When I traveled to India last month, I made sure that it was feasible to get the whole journey together with Enfield Himalayan.

Before going any further, I need to gauge the level of interest in joining me to ride India by motorcycle. This will help me see if there are enough interested parties to make such a trip worthwhile. I anticipate the journey would take three weeks excluding flights. Likely Dates either November 2023 or January 2024 & February 2024.

Please email me, if you are sure you would love to come with us. Email address – ravivermanasikse@hotmail.com

Thank you, Ravi Verma



R 1250 GS AND R 1250 RTP SAFETY RECALL

This safety recall involves the gearbox input shaft. In certain engine operating and riding conditions, i.e., an abrupt difference between the engine speed and the rotational speed of the final drive component, an overload of the gearbox input shaft could occur. This could result in damage to, or breakage of, the gearbox input shaft, and possibly result in a blocked rear wheel. If the gearbox input shaft became damaged and/or broke, or if the rear wheel became blocked, this could increase the risk of a crash.

The motorcycles affected by this recall are as follows:

MAKE MODEL MODEL YEAR(S)

BMW R 1250 GS 2019 – 2023

BMW R 1250 GS Adventure 2019 – 2023

BMW R 1250 RTP 2019 – 2023

Specific motorcycles affected:

All Model Year 2019 – 2023 BMW R 1250 GS motorcycles produced from 09/19/2018 through 12/14/2022. (6,812 motorcycles)

All Model Year 2019 – 2023 BMW R 1250 GS Adventure motorcycles produced from 10/10/2018 through 12/14/2022 (9,401 motorcycles)

All Model Year 2019 – 2023 BMW R 1250 RTP motorcycles produced from 07/19/2018 through 12/02/2022. (2,276 motorcycles)

Notification schedule

To remedy the defect, BMW will notify dealers and owners of this recall following the below notification schedule:

Planned Dealer Notification Date: 01/18/23 – 01/18/23

Planned Owner Notification Date: 03/10/2023 – 03/10/2023

Contacts

Should owners have any questions, they may contact BMW customer service at 1-800-525-7417.

Owners may also contact the NHTSA Vehicle Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236 (TTY 1-800-424-9153), quoting NHTSA Recall 23V011000, or go to www.nhtsa.gov

Note - All the official recall documents refers to one of the impacted models as BMW R1250 RTP which is the designation for a police RT. This may be a mistake. The quoted number of impacted bikes (above) suggests the recall should actually refer to the R1250 RT - Editor

Gearbox Input Shaft Part 573 Chronology - January 18, 2023

In October 2020, BMW became aware of a 2019 BMW R1250 GS in Italy in which a customer complained about a broken gearbox input shaft and a blocked rear wheel. Two additional similar complaints, in Italy and the Netherlands, in October and November 2020, involving 2019 BMW R1250GS models, were received. An engineering investigation was initiated. A parts return program was implemented, and the gearbox input shaft supplier was contacted. Although it was noticed that the three customer complaint motorcycles were all produced in June 2019, a review of the supplier production process did not result in any finding. Lab analyses involving material property evaluations, x-ray, scanning electron microscope, and surface treatment examinations did not result in any findings. Initial analyses could not determine a root cause or systematic production anomaly.

In July 2021, a complaint involving a 2019 BMW R1250 GS Adventure in France, about a broken gearbox input shaft (but without a blocked rear wheel), was received. Further analyses were conducted, including a continuation of the parts return program, and additional supplier production reviews and audits. Various FMEAs were performed.

Additionally, bench and road tests were conducted, including potential customer misuse riding scenarios. Further lab tests were performed involving force/torque applications, load change pulsations, x-ray, and dynamometer runs. The root cause could still not be identified, and the market continued to be monitored. In June 2022, BMW became aware of an incident involving a 2019 BMW R1250 GS in the United Kingdom that resulted in a crash with injury.

BMW intensified its investigation and analysis process, and in August 2022, BMW became aware of an incident involving a 2019 R1250 GS in the Czech Republic of a crash without injury. The analysis activities continued, including a review and comparison of engine, gearbox, and drivetrain design and operating parameters between the R1250 models and the prior generation R1200 models. The engineering investigation concluded that in certain engine operating and riding conditions, an overload of the gearbox input shaft could occur, and result in damage to, or breakage of, the gearbox input shaft, and possibly result in a blocked rear wheel.

On January 10, 2023, BMW decided to conduct a voluntary safety recall.

THE TRANSAMERICAN TRAIL TALE

Part 2 - Trinidad, CO to Medford, OR

Russ Drake wrote this two part essay back in 2009 after riding the TransAmerican Trail with a group of friends. This is the second part. The first part can be found in the January 2023 newsletter.

True to our word, the “Born to be Mild Gang” was back in Colorado where we left off from the first half of the TransAmerican Trail (TAT). This gang would be smaller than the first half of the trail ride since the word got out that the second half would be more of a challenge. My wife Hilary had driven with me in the truck and had hoped to drop me off at the motel and drive up to Denver to meet our friend Carol, from Idaho. The ladies planned to tour Colorado and Utah while we were playing in the dirt.

The gang leaves Trinidad, Co



Five of the original team, Bob (KTM 690), Guy (Suzuki 650), John (Kawasaki KLR 650), Jack (KTM 450), Dan (KTM 525), and I (KTM 450), met in Trinidad, CO to tackle the mountains and deserts of the second half of the Trail.

I had decided to bring the KTM along on this part of the TAT since we knew there would be more rocks, desert sand and less asphalt. I had prepped the bike weeks in advance by changing oil, adjusting the valves, replacing the chain, both sprockets and swapping the Ortlieb bags over from my F800GS. Most of us had started on half worn knobbies; we had pre-ordered new tires at a shop in Moab, UT. We left the motel on an ominous date, September 11, 2009 with everything running smoothly..... we thought.

The trail immediately turned onto a nice gravel road leading west into the San Isabel National Forest. Nice gravel roads most of the time with some dirt fire roads in the more remote sections of the forest.

About 200 miles into the day, my bike started to run terribly, as if it

was jetted too rich. At one point during a rest stop, the bike quit and would not start with the electric starter or by kicking it. We checked the carburetor jets, checked the bowl for water, checked spark.....nothing. We were about 50 miles from Salida, CO where we had planned to finish for the day. In order to get the bike started, we used a tow strap from the Jeep and finally the bike started. I told the rest of the guys that we should head for the motel without stops as I was afraid to stop the bike again. That last 50 miles was white knuckle time, trying to keep the rev's up so the bike would not stall. The guys behind me said that I was smoking up a storm. That night in Salida I called Hilary and told her the bad news, that I was dead in the water and that she would have to come and pick me up in the truck. The rest of the crew and I had agreed that they should go on and I would catch up somewhere along the route.

To make a long story short, we took the bike back to Valcom Motorsports, in Trinidad, where they ordered new parts overnight and repaired it in just a couple of days. Apparently, a small piece of the compression ring broke off and bounced around in the groove for a while battering material into the oil ring, thus the reason I had very little compression and was blowing oil.

During the time that the bike was in the shop, the girls dragged me around with them as they continued to play tourist. I was in a very miserable mood knowing that I was missing the best part of the Trail, but the girls ignored “grumpy” and tried to cheer me up, even though I was not a happy camper. The shop installed a new piston w/rings and reassembled the bike. Lucky for me the cylinder was not scored. The call from the shop stating that the bike was finished was music to our ears. I don't know who was happier, me or the girls knowing they were getting rid of me.

Moab, UT Trail



We caught up with the other bikes in Salina, UT after they had finished all of the high Colorado peaks and the red rock canyons around Moab, UT (bummer for me).

Back in the saddle again, heading down dirt roads towards Richfield, UT where they are staging the longest ATV parade in history for the Guinness Book of Records. We wove through the town trying to avoid the thousands of ATV's as we headed north out of town around a water tank and onto the Paiute ATV trail.

The trail continues through the Fishlake National Forest, known for the many recreational roads and trails set up for motorcycles, ATV's and other off-road explorers. The trees were just starting to turn colors, red, orange, yellow and purple. We came down out of the mountains into Kanosh, UT for gas.

This was the start of the desert section, the route sheet instructed us to "Stay on the main road for the next 80 miles", it said, "WARNING- 80 miles of empty desert, take plenty of water". It was 80 miles of fairly good gravel road. To keep us from getting bored, a few hidden rocks would creep out and smash our front wheels, keeping us awake. As if to break up the monotony, someone had abandoned an old car alongside the road. It looked like it had been there a while and Bob had to get in it, all the while checking for snakes, to have a Kodak moment. Later I found out that this was most likely a 1948 Frazer, built by the Kaiser-Frazer Automobile Co. (1946-1955). It was hard to tell the make as all identifying tags or labels were missing and the body was full of bullet holes.



After 223 miles for the day, we crossed the Nevada border and rolled into Baker, where we found gas and our motel for the night. The only motel in town was pretty shabby with only about 10 rooms, 7 of them filled. The arrangement was that some of us would utilize the three rooms and the rest would stay in the "bunk house" (a small house set up with a bunch of beds, a bath and small kitchen). Out of Baker, we traveled west into the Great Basin National Park, part of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. Somewhere along this stretch of trail we came to a two track that wound up through a pine forest. The trail got very narrow and we were worried that the Jeep would have trouble getting through. We waited for a while on the trail and sure enough here come Steve and Ken in the Jeep (with the mirrors folded), crashing through the branches with big smiles on their faces. There were many indications, from the hoof marks, that wild horses had used this trail quite frequently, but up to this point, we had yet to see any. The mountain ridges in Nevada mostly run north to south, so we would find ourselves traveling up across high passes, on rocky trails and down canyons into broad valleys and then climbing again into the next ridge, on and on.

In Eureka, NV we found the Best Western and walked up the hill in town to one of the few restaurants in town. 214 miles for this day's ride.

We were very lucky with the temperatures. We could keep our padded coats on for protection even during the middle of the day when the temps only reached the middle 70's.

From this point the trail starts to head North toward Highway 80 and Battle Mountain, our destination for the evening. The dirt, gravel and two-track trails seemed to go on forever passing many mines, ghost towns and mountain vistas overlooking U-shaped valleys. Sometimes the two-track would fade out into little semblance of a trail. In quite a few places my roll chart became useless because of the wide-open spaces and my speedo error. Many times, after traveling along a gravel road, I would see Bob make a turn along a fence line when my route chart indicated a half mile to go. This was where the GPS shined; the little arrow always knew where we were and where the route deviated. Only a few of Sam's roll charts have the GPS coordinates indicated at the turn points as does the eastern section.

At a particularly soft section of powder two-track, John had a high speed get-off with his KLR. The bike fell over on his foot, our only injury for the trip.



In sight of the town of Battle Mountain, traveling on a high-speed section of gravel, we were abruptly directed to turn left onto a two-track trail that was heavily used by four wheelers. The track was about 18 inches deep with talcum powder type dust. This track went west for a short while then turned north then turned east again back out to the same high speed gravel road mentioned before. Three of us (the dumb ones) met up with the

others who had wisely decided that they were not going to go into that dust bowl. We rode the short distance into town scratching our heads on Sam's choice of routing.

Since this day's ride was only 128 miles, several of us decided to seek out the local motorcycle shop (Nelson's Racing and Repairs) for some much-needed maintenance. Dan, Bob and Jack did oil changes and cleaned air cleaners. I had missed Moab, where everyone else had changed tires, and my rear tire knobs were whittled down to little nubs. Dan had a good used rear tire in the Jeep that they had taken off in Moab, and after a little negotiation, he relented and the shop installed the tire on my KTM.



We topped off our tanks on Highway 80 in preparation for the next day's ride north to McDermitt, NV, knowing this would be a long day between gas stops. This day's ride consisted of crossing a lot of flat desert, where a lot of the area was fenced off with barb wire gates, and we had to stop many times to open and close them. We rolled into Paradise Valley, a small farming community in Northern Nevada, hoping to find lunch. This being a Sunday we found nothing open and sat down in front of a local café that had chairs out front munching on granola and our Camel-bac water. The café opened later after we had already filled up.

The trail continued north through another section of the Humboldt-Toiyabe NF, only the route sheet says "Treeless National Forest". After about 150 miles, since I didn't have a clue to my whereabouts, I pulled up next to Bob and asked what the GPS said was the next gas point. He said "no problem, only about 10 miles ahead" and streaks off in a cloud of dust as I try and conserve fuel. The 10 miles turned into over 30 miles as we hit Highway 95 just south of McDermitt. With 183 miles showing on my trip odometer, I pull into the first gas station and put 3.2 gallons into my 3.2-gallon tank.



Russ connects with local wildlife in Paradise Valley

In the morning John elected to leave the group and head to his brother's house in California to nurse his still injured foot. The remaining five riders and Steve and Ken in the Jeep, continued due west along the Nevada-Oregon border through lush farmland. Twenty-two miles out of town the route sheet says "stop at the Zimmerman ranch and say hi to Kaylene and Arnie". We sat for a while deciding if we should open the gate and travel across their front yard or not, until Kaylene standing in her front yard, motioned us to come through. She said that we had missed the turn for the trail, but welcomed us to the ranch and we talked for a bit before continuing up the correct road.

There was gas at Denio Junction, NV where the wind was blowing hard as we filled up our tanks. We climbed an unusually rocky steep set of uphill that consisted of large lava rocks setting in a deep layer of powder. The four KTM's cleaned the section without mishap, but Guy on the Suzuki got sideways and required some assistance from the rest of us to get to the plateau. Steve and Ken in the Jeep had no problem with his 4-wheel drive. We were all glad that we were not riding a heavy bike like a R1200 GS in several sections like that one.

At the next intersection there seemed to be a discussion about lodging for the night. A decision was made that Bob and I would continue on the trail and the rest of the group would head back on the highway to Lakeview, OR. We stayed on the trail and traveled through the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge where we came across thousands of antelope grazing just off the dirt/gravel road. Bob and I had a nice ride over the next mountain range and into Fort Bidwell, CA. Awwwww California; Bob turned his camera on and we raced up a series of switchbacks on a wide, nicely maintained gravel road. We were sliding sideways around the corners and spraying each other with gravel. Down the backside of the ridge, through Fort Bidwell, CA, and headed north crossing into Oregon. After 213 miles on today's leg, the Best Western motel was a welcome sight and we joined the rest of the group (who had arrived earlier) to toast the days ride.

The next day's ride took us from Lakeview to LaPine, OR via the Fremont National Forest and through many nice dirt roads and an abandoned railroad grade. Lunch was lounging in front of a grocery store in Silver Lake where we helped Guy work on a whole jar of salsa with a large bag of chips.

Back on the trail out of Silver Lake, I came to an intersection on a wide dusty dirt road and waited for the rider behind me to arrive. A white pick-up truck came by and passed me stirring up a large cloud of dust. As the rider behind me arrived I hauled butt to try and catch the truck so I didn't have to eat his dust. He moved over and I waved thanks, thinking he was probably pissed that now he had to eat my dust.

The trail came out on Highway 97 at Gilchrist. There were only a few motels, without the numbers or the quality of rooms needed, so we headed north to LaPine where a Best Western was located. This was a 209 mile day.

As we pulled into the parking lot and were unloading our bikes, here comes that very same white pick-up truck and parks right next to us. The guy was very nice and was not pissed we passed him; he was worried that he did not pull over far enough for us. We offered him one of our beers and he said that he worked for the Oregon Power Co. and was patrolling the power lines in the area. He knew the town of LaPine well and recommended a Chinese restaurant that was just down the road from the motel, where he joined us for a great dinner.

Dan had discovered a leak coming from the water pump on his KTM that night and the next morning planned to get a ride down to Medford. Bob and I left the motel and planned to wait for the others at the exit to the trail off of Highway 97.

Miscommunication ruled the day, as we waited and waited and finally called Steve in the Jeep and found out that everyone else stayed behind to help Dan find a ride and get the bike loaded. It was decided that Bob and I would go on alone on the trail and

Old lava rock railroad grade near Ailver lake, OR



the gang. We finished up the day after another 200 miles, 100 of that on pavement, in Medford where the rest of the gang were settled into the motel.

At this point the schedules of everyone but myself would not allow a continuation of the last day of the trail. The last day would have taken us from Medford over to the coast on Highway 1 where the trail ends. Everyone had plane tickets from Medford to either Alaska or Arizona for the next day. Steve was taking off in the Jeep to see friends. Arrangements were made to store their bikes at a local bike shop called the Bike Barn in Medford until they could return for them.

Since Chuck Brown had ridden the first half of the TAT and couldn't make the second half, he had made plans to join us September 23rd in Medford for our final night to celebrate finishing the trail. After

the rest would take the shortest route by highway down to Medford. We got about 100 miles on the trail and came out to a paved road with a guy sitting in the back of a pick-up truck blocking the road. There was a large forest fire, located just above Medford in the Umpqua National Forest, and the road and trails continuing on were closed..... bumper. We found the ranger's headquarters and asked for a way around the fire, but everything was closed up tight. We would have had to take Highway 138 NW to Roseburg, down I-5 and cut back to Tiller, or just cut our losses and head to Medford and meet the rest of

approximately 2300 miles on the trail, the evening meal was filled with laughter, lies and more lies. Chuck had brought my R1100 RT and his Ducati up on his trailer where we swapped the KTM for the RT. I needed to get back home and he and his wife planned to spend a few days in Northern California and also bring Ken back to the Bay Area.

Russ Drake

Postscript In late October Chuck and I traveled up to Medford, on our GS's to meet the others who had stored their bikes at the Bike Barn. We went up two days earlier and decided to ride the last day of the trail from I-5 over to Highway 1. At noon of the next day being only about a quarter of the way across this section and getting lost, we decided to hit a very small paved road over to the highway. Beautiful fall colors and a small creek running alongside the road added to this great road. Spent the night in a little town near the coast called Coquille, OR. It was raining the next day as we wound our way south on Highway 1 to Port Orford and the end of the trail.

End of the TansAmerican trail in Port Orford, OR



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EVENTS

Board of Directors Meeting
04 Feb 2023 MotoGuild SF,
849 13th St. San Francisco, 10:00am-12:00pm

February Member Meeting and Campout
25-26 Feb 2023 Kelsey Creek Campground Group
Campsite, Clear Lake Breakfast at Canyon Cafe
3845 Broadway, American Canyon, CA 94503
at 8.00am. Leave at 9.00am sharp
Registration required

Board of Directors Meeting
04 Mar 2023 MotoGuild SF,
849 13th St. San Francisco, 10:00am 12:00pm

Tech Day
04 March 2023 MotoGuild SF,
849 13th St. San Francisco, 11:00am to 3:00pm
Members only. Registration required

**March Member Meeting and Campout
Death Valley!**
18-19 Mar 2023
Furnace Creek Campground
Registration required

ANNIVERSARIES

Jan	Dan Paolini	5
	Bob Stallard	5
	Wynne Benti	15
	Tom Connolly	15
Feb	Brian Mucke	5
Mar	Robin Matsumoto	10
	John Kabala	20

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