

BMWOCM NEWSLETTER

Volume 25, Issue 8 Sept. 2001

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Editor's Notes

What better test of motorcycle and rider is there than the one and only Ironbutt Rally? It is still going on as you read this (more on it in this issue), but preliminary results are mixed at best for BMW bikes and their riders. For a company with such a vaunted reputation for reliability, it's gone rather badly. Three final drive failures, including one on a R1150GS shipped all the way from Germany, have occurred, though the heroic effort of two dealers got two of the GS riders back on the road. The GS was supposed to be the bike to ride this year, as Lord Kneebone had made it abundantly clear that a trip to Alaska, indeed, to Prudhoe Bay/Deadhorse, would be in the cards. So when it was announced that riders could skip the regular checkpoints/lap of the lower 48, twenty two riders headed north, including well-known Team Strange leader Eddie James.

Eddie had forsaken his usual K11 ride this year, opting for the R1150GS, with the Touratech 10 gallon tank, Jessie bags and all the usual stuff. He looked ready to conquer this (to my mind) insane ride, from Alabama to Deadhorse to Key West (!) back to Alabama. How did he do?

News from up north as of 9/3 had Eddie finally off the Dalton Highway. He did not make it to Prudhoe Bay, spending two days in Coldfoot attempting to repair rear end problems, finally getting a trailer to haul the bike back to Fairbanks, the nearest dealer. Oh yeah, the axle broke on the trailer too. And his side stand broke, pinning him under his bike at one point. I would be surprised to see Mr. James on an Oilhead ever again. Meanwhile, the first two bikes to make it up there were Hondas, an ST1100 and a CBR1100XX - hardly in the same league as the GS for that kind of road, one would think...even a Honda Reflex scooter (250cc) was seen Sunday night in Fairbanks headed north.

Over Labor Day weekend, I sold my Kawasaki Concours. Just wasn't doing anything for me, though it was/is a very capable machine. I was planning to put the money down on a new GS, thinking it was the bike for me. After reading the results of the Ironbutt so far, no way. Why spend \$16K, only to be bested by a scooter? I'll stick with the old ParisDakar, thank you. And, I picked up a >73 Norton 850 Commando as part of the Kawi deal. I'm already thinking, maybe I'll run it in the next Minnesota 1000. Can't be any less reliable, can it?

President's Column

Apparently, some of you find it hilarious hearing of my motorbike trials and tribulations. So much so that I've been asked to report my latest story in print so that those that didn't make it to the annual Afton picnic can slap their knees and wipe more tears of hilarity from their cheeks. I am so glad I can be of assistance in your amusement.

Yes, I threw a rod. Yes, it was brutal. No, I had never thrown a rod before, and yes, I knew exactly what it was when it happened. Why, you ask? Because it sounds exactly like that; a steel rod, broken off and slamming about the interior of one's engine block. Not a pretty sound.

Let me start from the beginning: I'm rushing my painter to finish the blasted custom paint job on my bike (I finally got the side covers and correct faring for it) so that I can participate in the annual Fuel Cafe to Motor Oil Cafe Tourist Trophy race the next day. He is freaking out, saying that I can't possibly ride it yet (the paint isn't cured, and I will surely get bug imprints on it! I don't care, I have waited too long as it is - I finally have my really cool, custom painted bike FULLY finished and ready to show off - I am determined this year to pull into Fuel with a really neat bike! So, I'm traveling down the road with a new BMWOCM club member, Aaron Rose, towards Milwaukee to stay the night, then start off the next morning from Fuel Cafe. The goal is to follow the map precisely, picking up whatever souvenirs or do some silly task asked of you in order to move onto the next location. In short, it takes about 5 hours of riding and turns it into about 11 hours of twisted, grueling roads. So Aaron and I are flying along the freeway at some ridiculous speed to get there when, BLAMMO! The first incident occurs.

A Cadillac directly in front of us blows a tire and spins out in the middle of the freeway. We are immediately behind it. I have two semis behind me, and have to swerve quickly from the right lane into the fast lane to avoid hitting the Caddy. The car stops right there, parked horizontally across both lanes in the middle of the freeway. I had slammed my brakes on so hard to avoid hitting it, that I had killed my engine. Very scary, considering those semi's were coming up behind me at 70 mph. The whole thing was a

mess. There was a van on my immediate right that had to make the decision to either swerve into me to avoid hitting the Caddy or just slam into it - thankfully, they chose to hit the Caddy. Aaron and I pulled off to the side of the road - I was pretty shaken. The semi-trucks saw what had happened and stopped to see if we were O.K. Aaron said he had smelled burning rubber and wasn't sure where it was coming from until maybe 30 seconds before the Caddy's tire blew. By then he had diagnosed the situation and was laying on his horn to alert the Caddy driver to pull over. He didn't hear Aaron, and either did I. Further argument for a solid air horn.

If that's not bad enough, we get back into the swing of things and come barreling up on a trio of bikes - two BMW's and one Honda - the latter driven by my very own 2-up partner in the MN1K, Mark Kiecker, and a Beemer ridden by our very own club member Will Outlaw. They have one of Will's long-distance riding buddies with them, Tim. We ride with them for awhile, (Tim, in the meantime, had no idea that we all knew each other). Since my good old >79 tank was the smallest of the bunch, I was soon pointing to it, saying I needed to pull off for gas. Tim points to his fuel cell and says no need for him to stop! Great. Yet another sensitive male. So I pull up to Kiecker and do the same - he just waves at me, as if to say Bye-Bye. Shoulda bought a Honda (his standard response). So, OK - screw you guys, we're only 45 minutes away from Milwaukee at this point, so I'll just see you there, and in fact, with the rate you grandpas are riding, I'll likely be waiting on you. (tee hee)

My buddy Aaron had previously discussed his need to turn off at that intersection, as he was visiting an old friend for the night before the race. So off I go, down the exit ramp, as Will waves goodbye, and my engine suddenly kills. UmCwhat?? I know I'm not THAT low on gas. I look up forlornly to see the last remnants of an Aerostich jacket fading into the distance and try starting it again: BLAMBLAMBLAMBLAMBLAM!!!!@. Yowsa. This does NOT sound good.

I get off the bike and check the basics, but I know that it was definitely an internal engine sound. Really ugly. Try it again: AWhamBLAMBLAMBLAMBLAMADAM!!@.

At this point, two guys in a pickup truck pass me and yell out AYou shoulda bought a Harley!@. I get incensed, wheel around and yell back AOh yeahClike Harleys NEVER do this, do they?!? That's why you have a freaking TRUCK, fools!@. Not a good moment.

I have only one cell phone number of all the people I know are in Milwaukee - Kiecker's. I leave a msg. where I'm stranded, that I don't know what I'm gonna do. I walk up to the local S.A. - can they tell me where I can find a mechanic? Oh, no problem, lady; it's only 5:30 on a Fri. evening! The clerk says Athere are none@. Now, I realize this is a small town, but honey; you have GOT to have a mechanic somewhere in this god-forsaken place! She doesn't know - maybe at the 10,000 Auto Parts store? I call thereCnope, but there is a (Lord...)HONDA dealership in town, and they have motorcycles. So I call them. I proceed to whine a LOT till the owner says OK - he'll send someone down to trailer my sorry BMW butt there. They do. They don't charge me, as they figured if it was a broken rod I would be broke enough. He sends two young kids that work in his shop - they're amused as hell that I'm out here all on my lonesome with a broken bike, having delusions that I'm some BMW club president or some such thing. >Yeah, right lady. You don't look like you know how to change your own oil=, they're thinking. Well, we get there, and the owner of this Honda dealership is the former two-time world champion of water/jet ski racing. Cool! He hears the sound and thinks it sounds like a connecting rod, but isn't sure. But he has a mechanic that used to do a fair amount of work on Beemers - maybe he can look at it in the morning and diagnose it? Otherwise, might I be interested in a brand new Honda?? (Kiecker would have loved this!). I tell you, I have never in my life been so tempted to >defect=. He's showing me his VFRs and CBRs and a multitude of other alphabet soup - but no, for some really bizarre reason (try sinking way too much into it?)

I want to stick with my old nemesis.

To make up for their previous abandonment, about 50 minutes later, in roll Kiecker, Will and Tim, who has now figured out that the crazy lady on the R-65 was riding with them for a reason. With a switch of a fuel cell, I was on the back of one of the bikes and rescued once again! Yea!! It was such a bummer to not at least be able to roll into Fuel with a cool looking bike. I was so depressed watching everyone leave the next morning that I just went back to my hotel room and pouted. Hey, at least I had a hotel room and not a camp site to return to! Watched Wimbledon and waited for my significant other to come to the rescue of both me and my bike. A very depressing experience.

So now here I sit, thinking: sailboat or new engine? New engine or sailboat? HmMMMM. Is God trying to tell me something with this bike?? Oops, there I went, on the IBMWR site ordering a new R80 engine from some BMW member in Alabama. Now I just need to find somebody to put it in. Any volunteers out there?? Can't afford Moon Motors at \$50/ hour. Then Rick (at Trackstar) repeats his mantra of how I need to learn how to fix my own bike. But Rick: seeCI have these things. They're called fingernails!

Juuuuuust kidding!

*Molly Gilbert
President (with a Broken Bike)*

Darrell=s Tip of the Month

Situation:

You=re a rider who needs a clean bike before you take off each morning or at least need the windshield, seat and mirrors clean. You generally take along a couple of old towels but after 2 days in rough weather you have no clean ones for morning 3. You=re in the motel, peak out the window to see who is watching and then sneak out with the room towel to wipe the bike down hoping no one sees you. Then it is quickly back to the room to roll the dirty towel in another clean towel or toss in a corner hoping room service does not see it before tossing in the dirty towel bag.

Solution:

Take 2 minutes, walk to the front desk (or better yet ask when you check in) and ask them for an old towel so you can wipe your boots and bike off in the morning. Let them know it will be dirty when you finish. Tell them you will leave the dirty towel in the room when you leave. Your motel will appreciate your concern for their business and have a generally good impression of bikers. You might be surprised how many give you a couple and tell you to take them with you. Now you can leave your dirty ones there and take the clean ones along. Everybody wins here.

Will Outlaw=s Buckeye 1000 (*First Place*) Ride Report

I run endurance rallies for fun. Sick, perhaps, but true.

How I finish has always been, at best, my third priority, behind not crashing and having a good time. I've ridden some pretty stupid routes just because they looked like a box of laughs. So having fun was my plan for the inaugural Buckeye 1000. The B1K is a lot like the Minnesota 1000, with which you may or may not be familiar.

The most significant difference is, of course, Ohio.

The B1K is a 24-hour endurance rally that starts just outside of Columbus, is not necessarily all in Ohio and not necessarily 1,000 miles. The good folks at Team Strange (www.teamstrange.com) put on both the Buckeye and Minnesota 1000s, so you know it is a first-class event.

In the interest of having fun, I decided to get out of Ohio as quickly as possible. Ohio has a staggeringly aggressive approach to traffic enforcement and the place is simply swarming with state troopers. It's not my idea of fun.

My route took me on a huge circle around lakes Huron and Erie, starting from Columbus to Hell, Michigan, up to the Mackinac Bridge linking Michigan's lower and upper peninsulas, through Sault Ste. Marie and across Ontario through Sudbury and down to Parry Sound, through Toronto and across the Rainbow Bridge at Niagara Falls, down I-90 through Erie, PA and back into Ohio where I made a quick stop near Canaan, which is a few miles off of I-71 in the vicinity of Ashland, down to a truck stop near Berkshire, around Columbus to Dublin, back through Columbus to Hebron and finally back to the finish in Pickerington.

It looked like a pretty good time. I'd never been to Hell and really wanted to see Parry Sound, so off I went.

I made the run more or less on schedule, finishing with a bit more than 1,500 miles in about 25 hours. I usually don't pound out that many miles, but I'd underestimated the length of the route by about 200 miles. That extra 200 miles cost me a chance to pick up bonus points for grabbing three hours of sleep. I bagged the rest and managed to more than offset the loss of those points by hitting the bonus stops in Canaan, Dublin and Hebron.

I knew I'd put in a good run but I figured somebody else had pulled off something amazing. At the start of the rally I thought 8,000 points was possible and at 7,736 points I wasn't quite to that total. As it turned out, I'd won, taking first overall ahead of Gary

Sweet, who finished with just under 7,000 points.

Considering my victory "speech" was basically "my ass hurts", it's safe to say I was surprised. Had I expected to win, I would have thought of something more eloquent. Perhaps "My ass really hurts. Thank you very much" would have done the trick. Lord, how embarrassing. I was pretty well shagged by then and was having a really hard time functioning.

My first thought when Adam Wolkoff handed me the winner's plaque was, oddly enough, about Pauline Ralston but I was too tired to translate it into words. It didn't really hit me that I'd won the rally until I was riding home later that day. Winning was pretty cool. Getting back in one piece was much cooler.

For me, a rally is like a series of snapshots linked by stretches of pavement.

Some highlights:

+ Following a Hyundai in traffic outside of Toledo that was occupied by, I assume, Cheech and/or Chong. The pot smell was really thick so I opened my face shield and started breathing as deeply as possible. Like, groovy man.

+ Paul Pelland looking at me deadpan in Hell, MI and saying "I'm pissing right now. I just thought you'd like to know that." Sure enough, he had a catheter on. Crazy bastard.

+ Riding in a light drizzle and watching the sun reflect off of the Mackinac Bridge towers several miles ahead. That bridge is simply amazing.

+ Standing along I-75 and laying my R1100GS on it's side to slosh fuel over to the pick up in the right lobe of the tank. I seem to wind up doing that at least three times on every rally. It's the only feature of the GS that I don't like. Other than that, it's a fantastic endurance bike.

+ The second-most beautiful customs agent I've ever seen happened to be staffing the Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. border crossing that day. She was dreamy, eh?

+ Running into Keith Collins in Parry Sound, Ont. at 11:30 p.m. He was heading North, around the ground I'd already covered. The few hundred miles of Canadian two-lane between Parry Sound and Sault Ste. Marie is tough riding, especially in the dark. I just looked at Keith, looked at my watch and said "Um, good luck."

+The most beautiful customs agent I've ever seen. She was staffing the Niagara Falls crossing. Seriously, she was stunning. There's something about a woman in a bullet-resistant vest at 2 a.m. that gets my motor running. The look on her face when I said, "What? There's no toll in this direction? I need to get a receipt for crossing the bridge. I'll see you in 10 minutes." was priceless.

+ Coming within, no shit, about two-inches of getting killed by an Ohio State Patrol cruiser on I-71 early Sunday morning. I checked my mirrors, didn't see anything. I was exhausted and forgot to do a head check. I went to pass a car and next thing I know, there was a cruiser there. He had to have been doing well over a ton with no lights on. Really scary. That's exactly how you get hurt on one of these things. Lesson learned and it's just pure luck that I'm here to pass it on.

The most important prize is getting back safely. Anything else pales in comparison.

Secretary's Report

This will be the shortest report on record, but here it goes. On August 9, 2001, the BMWMOCM held their annual pot luck at Afton City Park, which was another success, with many members present and lots of food consumed. This secretary's report will be short as my two-year-old, Mallorie, decided to melt down about the time the Ameeting@ began and I had to dash out. I heard that the venison brats were a success - thank you to the chef. Our president seemed to prefer the chocolate cake - in her own words, Ait rocked!@

From that point on the meeting ensued and I am not sure what was said, for which I apologize.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of you who had faith in me to fulfill this position in the club. I enjoyed feeling so important and being so involved. As nominations for next year begin in October, I would like each and every one of you to think of another who would be worthy (and of course you all are) of filling my position for the 2002-03 term. I decided that I would like to concentrate my efforts on improving the children's activities for next year's rally so that no child will be tempted to say, Athis sucks!@

Respectfully submitted by,
Michelle Moe, Secretary.

Notes from Bob Cox

If you have not heard by now ATrackstar@ has closed its doors. I talked to the owners and the new plans are to open an all Euro bikes shop in St Paul. There is a BMW franchise open in St Paul, so who knows. I wish them the best of luck.

I would recommend members try to make the Dells Rally on Sept. 7,8 and 9th. It is a short drive and the last close rally of the year. Great camping and vendors available, and when you are sitting around the TV in January, telling yourself that things will be different next summer and you are going to ride more, you'll have wished you'd made this event.

Four weeks ago I and three of my friends trailered our KLR650s to Colorado. We rode over (not to, but over) Mosquito

Pass , the highest gravel pass in North America. We were loaded with camping gear, which made the going tough. You lose about 5% of your horsepower for every 1000 ft. you rise above sea level. The KLR is one great Dual Sport bike.

If you are planning to put you bike away for the winter, be sure you change the oil. If you do not have the chance to change the filter, at least do the oil. Moisture and dirty oil create hydrochloric acid , which can rust the engine internally. Spray or wipe the aluminum parts with W-D 40 (Water Disbursement # 40). Aircraft maintenance manuals do not approve its use on rubber, vinyl, or cloth. Fill the tank to the top , as this will prevent moisture in the gas tank, and add a fuel stabilizer such as Stabil.. Oil, if you want the best protection for a multi cylinder BMW , use Mobil One - end of discussion .

With the closing of Trackstar, how long will the AMotor Oil Café@ remain open ? I feel that we=d better start looking for a new place to meet. I plan to show up in the parking lot of Trackstar for the September 13th meeting, with club DECALS available for purchase.

CLUB DECALS I have been working on a club decal and will have them for sale at the September meeting. The cost will be 3 decals for \$2.00 . Please have the correct change. If you can not make the meeting, please send a check payable to the ABMW Club of MN A and a self -addressed envelope to: Bob Cox , 133 Larpenteur Ave. E., Maplewood, MN 55117. The AT@ shirts I had earlier this year sold out the first night. This should not happen with the decals. I wish to thank all members in advance for the support of these items . Any profit we make goes into the club treasury. *Bob Cox*

The BMWOCM Fall Round Up is SOLD OUT! Thanks for your support for this event, and here=s hoping fantastic fall weather for everyone involved.

2001 Ironbutt Report

As mentioned, our own Karol Patzer is the club=s sole entrant in the 2001 Ironbutt Rally, though some of us have other local favorites (Mark Kiecker and Eddie James most notable). Thanks to the Internet, one can feel almost a part of this thing, gobbling up all possible info, waiting and wondering who will do what amazing feat, who will pull off the impossible ride?

I was most fascinated by Eddie James decision to head for the Alaska bonuses offered at the start of the rally. The route screams Apoison@, with no guarantee that completing this fearsome ride would result in a win, because you=d have no idea what could have been available on the next legs. It=s a zero-sum, all or nothing gamble, one I did not expect from such an esteemed veteran rider. Still... it=s a bit complex, but one would hope that a ride to Deadhorse/Prudhoe Bay, AK, along with Denali N.P., back to Key West, FL, returning to Madison, Alabama by next Friday, could still win this event (with other stops along the way..). Everything depends on the weather on the Haul Road/Dalton Highway this Labor Day weekend. About twenty two riders are reputed to be attempting this run (somehow, I think Pat O=Keefe would be among them if he had entered :) You can follow Officer Eddie=s progress at www.teamstrange.com, or all the news at www.ironbutt.com.

Mr. Kiecker was in Athird place@ at the first checkpoint in Pomona, CA, and boy am I sad to be sitting here at home, watching this talented young man and past co-rider kick butt. I told him months ago he could win this thing, though last year=s winner George Barnes seems to be on a mission. Mark rode so hard on the second leg that he managed to dent both rims of his 2000 Honda VFR800, though he=d had the presence of mind to have two new rims with tires waiting for him at the Sunnyside, WA checkpoint. At the Sunnyside checkpoint, the Awinning ride A was handed out, and though the official bonus list has not yet been posted, anecdotal evidence says that the big dogs are headed north, way north, for a 1,000,000 point bonus at Deadhorse. Pity the poor rider who opted to go north early, and now - heading south - gets to see a yellow VFR screaming up the Haul Road. I=m not sure, but I believe Mark will do it. Watch out Mr. Barnes.

Information on the Ironbutt Rally has been extremely difficult to obtain this year, due to a real crackdown on premature bonus listings and rider names. Indeed, there has been no list of riders posted, ever. No standings since Pomona either. Why? Evidently, in the last rally, early listing of bonuses lead to crowds of well-intentioned supporters gathering and causing problems for riders, the most egregious example occurring at Dollywood, where security was upset and confiscated one rider=s flag. And, concerns are rising about insurance companies not honoring claims made by Ironbutt riders. Indeed, Geico has reportedly began a policy of not insuring bikes ridden over 500 miles/day! Spouses and significant others have caused trouble too, as some apparently were not totally aware of what their loved one was up to and, reading with horror on the Net what was really going on, made Kneebone=s life very difficult, demanding information and more.

The rally ends September 7th. Good luck to Karol and all the rest. Give >em hell, Mark

Club Officers

Molly Gilbert, President 612.712.0045
Kevin Kocur, Vice-president 763.566.0243
Jeff Oden, Treasurer 612.922.8258
Michelle Moe, Secretary 763.323.4932
Larry Stern, Board member 651.223.3743
Deb Westberg, Board member 763.754.1614
Mike Donohue, Board member 651.633.2262
Bob Ekberg, Board member 651.690.5968
Dale Peterson, past President 651.739.4623

Sheldon Moe is our **Activities Coordinator**. You can reach him @ 763.323.4932 or sandmmoe@webtv.net.

The club voice mail number is **612.534.7433**. Check it out for the latest on club activities.

Steffan Fay is our **web meister**. Contact him at sfay@odbs.com, and please visit the club website at www.bmwcom.com.

Deadline for newsletter ads or submissions is the **21st** of the month. Really, it is. Contact Bart at blbakker@isd.net or phone 651.645.7796.

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Events Calendar

Sept. 4th : BMWMOCM board meeting at Motor Oil Café, 7:30 p.m.

Sept. 7-9 : 31st Wisconsin Dells rally, at Crockett's Resort, Lyndon Station. *The best in the Midwest*, or so it is said.

Sept. 13 : BMWMOCM general meeting at Motor Oil Café. They will stay open late for our meeting that night, so I have been told.

Sept. 20-23 : BMW RA 29th International Rally, Morganton, NC. \$25 at the gate, I can't wait. See www.bmw.org for details.

Oct. 12-14 : 26th Falling Leaves Rally, Potosi, MO, 60 miles SW of St. Louis. \$15 at the gate, go if you haven't.

Ten More Reasons Why BMW Riders Don't Wave

10. Wasn't sure whether other rider was waving or making an obscene gesture.
9. Afraid might get frostbite if hand is removed from heated grip.
8. Has arthritis and the past 400 miles have made it difficult to raise arm.
7. Reflection from scratched windshield momentarily blinded him.
6. The espresso machine just finished.
5. Was actually asleep when other rider waved.
4. Was in a three-way conference call with stock broker and accessories dealer.
3. Was distracted by odd shaped blip on radar screen.
2. Was simultaneously adjusting the wind shield height, programmable CD player, seat temperature and satellite navigation system.
1. Couldn't find the Aauto wave back@ button.

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Want Ads

For Sale: 1990 BMW Paris/Dakar, red/white, 33,000 miles. Parabellum windshield, headlight protector (clear stick-on type), volt meter, newer Avon Gripsters, Harrison Bullit front brake caliper, Corbin solo seat, factory tank bag, Fox Twin Clicker shock, Schneider's side stand fixer and fat foot, flip-a-lever cruise control, new greaseable driveshaft by Neff Engineering, Hepco-Becker junior bags, plus Touratech aluminum cases (all use the same mounts), rebuilt rotor and newer diode board and mounts by Motorrad Elektrik, high output voltage regulator, never off road, never down. I know I've missed something but enough is enough! This is one sweet item. \$7800. Bob Cox @ 651.489.6467.

BMW Motorcycle Owner=s Club of Minnesota
155 Faye Street
St. Paul, MN 55119

For Sale : 1992 K75S Blue, approx. 6,800 miles. BMW hard bags, Throttlemeister, Corbin seats. \$5,000. Gary Lieske 763.559.5963 or HerrLieske@aol.com

For Sale: I have the KLR Tengai for sale @ \$995. It runs but needs work as you will see. Very good tires, less than 3000 miles on Avon Gripsters. This bike needs a new battery, chain and sprockets. Contact Bob Cox at 651.489.6467

For Sale : Stock Boge shock for old R100GS models. Well used but not leaking. Make an offer. Bart @651.645.7796 or blbakker@isd.net

