

August 2010

Apex

Looking Through The Curve

Official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc. Lexington, Kentucky
MOA #146 RA #4-49 <http://www.bluegrassbeemers.org>



In Memoriam: Fred Rice

In the evening hours of July 10th, while my nephew Paul and I were at Vintage Days, we got a phone call telling us that Fred Rice, my brother, Paul's father, had collapsed in the grocery store near his home in Ashland, unable to breathe, and was on his way to the hospital.

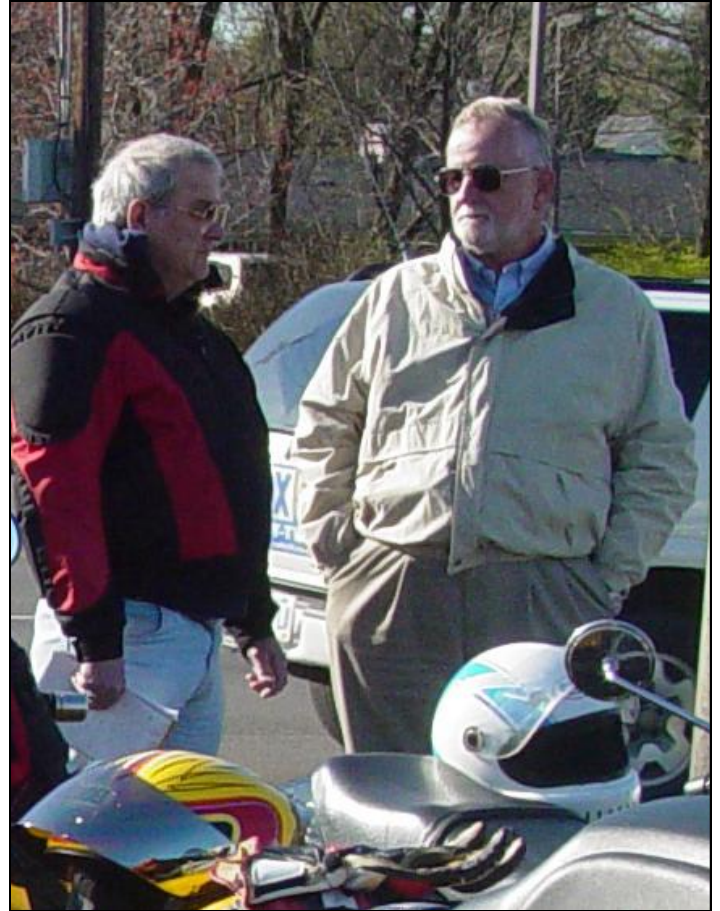
Not long after, we learned that Fred had died before arriving at the emergency room.

Fred was 72 years old, eleven years my senior. I thought about the fact that his death occurred while I was at this most favorite motorcycle event and that I probably would not have been there had it not been for him.

In 1958, on a whim he borrowed a motorcycle, an Ariel 500cc single, and on that brief lark took me, his little brother, for a ride that changed my life forever, for the better.

Fred didn't catch the bug and never cared much for the beasts again, but obviously the gene skipped a generation and landed full force in his son Paul.

We are measured, in large part, by the influences we leave



Boone Sutherland and Fred Rice in conversation at a Saturday Bluegrass Beemers gathering.

behind, by the reasons this world is different because we were here.

I cannot catalog Fred's traces in that way in this short piece....he left a wife of nearly forty eight years, four children, eight grandchildren and memories that they and I will always have.

But specifically, in the context of this newsletter, he left me with motorcycling, that is as much a part of me as a vital internal organ, incapable of removal.

For that I will always thank him.

—John Rice

**Apex is the official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc.
Lexington, Kentucky MOA #146 RA #4-49**

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**Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.
Back issues of Apex can be accessed at
<http://www.bluegrassbeemers.org>**

**Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd.
on any Saturday, 7-9:30 a.m.**

Race Report:

Road America 06-12/13 and Grattan Raceway 06-19/20

By Brian Sawyer #508



After a long schedule out West, AHRMA returned to eastern side of the country in mid June for Road America in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin.

This is a great track, 4 miles in length, with 14 turns and

long straightaways. This is a BIG Horsepower track. For that reason, we left the BMW racebike at home. No need to replace a broken Camshaft/Crankshaft/Connecting Rod etc. because we didn't notice the Tach hit 9800 rpm.

We took the Ducati 800SS and Yamaha YZ450f. The plan was to stay up North for the week between these two races, but the reality of the economy won, and we came back to get some billable hours in between.

That straightaway at the bottom is over 4000 feet long, and the back straight is over 3500 feet, plenty of time to build up a big head steam coming into the turn.

So having never been on this track before I was eager to get some time in at practice on Fri-

day before the races Saturday and Sunday.

I never pre-register for practice because you don't know when rain will be forecast and there is no upcharge to pay for it at the last minute. And Thursday we had a pretty good torrential rain, making the thought of coming down that long straight to turn 1 on a wet track a bit inhibiting. That torrential rain Thursday led to some flooding but subsided by Friday morning.

So Friday morning, the skies were gray but the rain had stopped and I marched down to the registration desk to pay for practice that day.

The Unofficial Ahrma Forum had a discussion about practice a few days previous, as many thought the \$120 fee was rather high, as it's usually \$100. But the real contention was about whether it was going to be \$120 per Racer or per Bike!

We were assured that this had all been straightened out and it would be "Per Racer."

So imagine my ungrateful response when the registration worker told me that it would be \$240 to practice that day with two bikes. I responded that I thought this had been worked out and was told it had been, that it would be \$240 for two bikes.



Road America

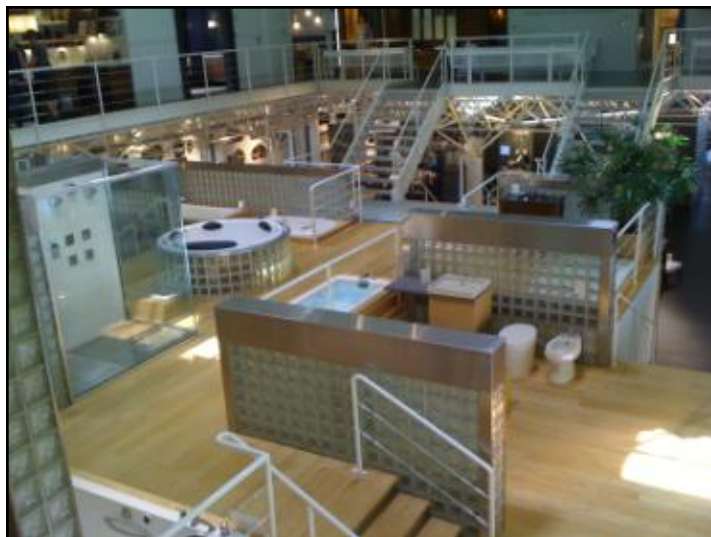
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In 1883, the Kohler Foundry produced an enameled cast iron Hog Scalding water trough, and began selling it as a “Bath Tub,” marking the first of many plumbing products manufactured by Kohler Co.



Torrential rain on Thursday caused some flooding.

So I said no thank you, and went into the town of Kohler, WI to be a tourist for the day! Now Kohler, WI was only 20 miles away and was a “Factory Town” built town with urban planning designed in 1917 by the Olmstead Brothers (the Landscape Architectural firm that laid out the streets of Ashland Park here in Lexington). This was a very innovative factory town, with very pleasant worker housing.

In 1883, the Kohler Foundry produced an enameled cast iron

Hog Scalding water trough, and began selling it as a “Bath Tub”, marking the first of many plumbing products manufactured by Kohler Co.

Kohler maintains many of the older factory buildings and the Design Center was housed in a former Basketball Gymnasium of a Company run school in Kohler, with all of their latest bed and bath products.

So I entertained myself perusing the Whirlpool baths, toilet bowls, lavatories, Kitchen

sinks company history, and community involvement of the Kohler Company that day. So when I returned to the track around 5:PM that day, I was surprised to find out that the

track had relinquished about noon that day, and allowed racers to practice for a half day rate of \$60 per RACER... Damn!

I really needed that practice, and Saturday we would only have two practice sessions before racing began at Noon. So I went out on each bike and tried as best I could to start learning the track. The track was still damp in sections, and I would crest the top of a small hill, knowing there was a sharp turn to follow...but was it a left-



Kohler, WI, a ‘Factory Town’ built with urban planning designed in 1917 by the Olmstead Brothers.

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hander or right? A four-mile track is longer than anything I had ever been on, and 14 turns, turn in points, gear selection for given speed at each turn and two bikes that vary this information was too much to master from two practice sessions, I was in trouble.

Worse than that was my old nemesis, Kevin Brown was there from Kansas City. Kevin and I went back 6 years ago, when he first humbled me in a race in Louisiana, when upon passing me in the 4th lap, he turned around on his bike and gave me a patronizing wave, indicating he was history. I had never forgotten that wave. He didn't come out for very many races these days. We had raced last fall at Barber, and he beat me on Saturday that weekend. But on Sunday, I stayed with him, followed him for 5 laps. I watched his every move, where his turn points were, his shift points, his brake points and noticed he was braking a little early in turn 5.

So in lap 5 of a 6 lap race, I followed into turn 4 right be-

hind him. There was a short straight and I dove into the inside late-braking him and cutting him off coming out of turn 5. I almost went wide and gave it back to him, but held on ...I only had to hold this lead for 6 more turns. I was a scalded dog, running for my life. I had never beaten Kevin before, and he was good. You could not screw up, or he would punish you.

We passed the finish line, and he came along side only a half second behind me, but that was enough!

But that was then and this was now, at Road America. Different track, one I did not know, and Kevin had raced here many times. I was riding the YZ450 in Sound of Singles 2 class in the race with Kevin. Over on the Ducati, which was entered in Battle of Twins (BOT) Formula 3 I had a different set of problems. I had changed the sprockets for higher gearing for Road America, and back home I had re-installed the rear wheel, and the asymmetrical wheel spacer, and

every time I tightened up the rear axle, the rear wheel would not rotate freely. Something was amiss.

I couldn't figure it out, and so decided to lightly tighten the axle nut and safety wire it, and look at it later. When I took the Ducati out for practice, the track still seemed wet, and when I would go to accelerate out of the corners, that torquey engine would break traction, and I could feel the wheel slip. So it came to race time, and the Ducati was up first. We went out for the warm-up lap, the track was dry, and still I could feel the wheel slip. Something else was wrong.

Then it hit me. That was my rear axle slipping back and forth! I could not go out there and race this thing, I was a danger to myself and everyone on the track in a race. I made it around the track and went into my pit area, forfeiting the race. I put it up on the rear stand and sure enough you could move the axle with your hand. I had installed the wheel spacer back-

wards, and upon reversing it, all was fine.

But there went Race One on Day 1. Maybe I could have figured this out sooner, if I had practiced on Friday!

So that was race 3, and now I had to refocus my goal on Race 6 on the Yamaha. I needed to relinquish my guilt over that stupid oversight, and concentrate on the next race. Race time came, I was on the starting grid, I was determined to get a jump on the start, go for the lead and carry it thru to the end. I revved up the motor, held it at 6000 rpm, I dropped the clutch...the bike lurched forward...and died.

I had killed the motor by not adequately feathering the clutch. I hurriedly pulled out the kick lever, two kicks and I was going again, but the pack was gone, there were a half mile away now. I ran for all I was worth over that 24 mile race, but I could not make it up. I took a forth place. Damn, dumb mistake No. 2! Day 1 over.



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Road America 06-12/13 and Grattan Raceway 06-19/20

By Brian Sawyer #508

Over 500 miles of driving, hauling two bikes and an Air-stream Trailer, Gasoline for the above, \$400 in race entry fees, and two dumb mistakes and the day was a wash! Not much to show for those efforts.

Oh, and No 1 in the Sound of Singles Race...Mr. Kevin Brown.

Day 2: Ok, problems fixed with the Ducati. Two practice rounds on each bike, starting to get comfortable with my turn in points, gear selections, picking up speed in some of the turns, or at least not scrubbing off as much speed going into turns. Race 3 coming up for Ducati. Weather is clear, track is dry... weird thing about the track... there are several turns that the track surface is darker than the straights, making it appear damp and it's not!

Race 3 about to start, the clutch on the Ducati is a real trick to feather, I basically don't try, I just keep the revs low, and get the clutch out as quickly as possible and try to gain ground with that torquey motor. The race is off, I get a pretty good start surprising myself, and go into turn one in the top 3-4 racers.

My attention to the track is paying off; I am following Tim Lyle, who is the class points leader on an SV650. I pass Tim Lyle (34), late breaking into turn 5, and he comes back a lap later and passes me back. There is a Ducati 900 from another class, who has considerably more power in the straights, but the rider is uncertain in the turns.

If I can get past him, and pass Tim Lyle, and wedge the



Ducati rider between Tim and I, I can gain enough ground that Tim won't be able to come back. I pass the Ducati, Tim and I go into the chicane side by side, Tim goes wide a bit, HE'S GONE OFF THE TRACK INTO THE GRASS! No looking back now, one lap to go, we take Second Place! The weekend is looking better! Day 2,

Race 6: Sound of Singles. So here we are, it's time to race. I need to play hard, aggressive, but not stupid. Get a good start, and earn the win. I get a pretty good start, but Kevin Brown and another racer both get a better start.

I run a pretty solid race, no real mistakes, but take third... Kevin Brown takes 1st, ...nothing for him this weekend. Still too much to learn about this track for me to offer up any

real competition. Pack it in, and head out.

I mentioned earlier that I had planned on staying up North for the week in between, but the economy being what it is, it didn't seem like I should be on vacation. I head out of Elkhart Lake area about 6:PM local time, and get into Lexington about 4:45 AM. Monday is a pretty wasted day, but unload the truck and get a few things done.

06.18.10 Grattan Raceway On top of that there was another problem with the Ducati. I had noticed it at Road America too...the gear shift would not upshift on the first attempt. It would go into second fine, but attempts to hit third were a missed shift. Now this never happen before and the only thing different is I had gotten new racing boots, what was the

deal? Now I had come on this trip to RA and Grattan alone, all my racing buddies of the once large and formidable "Kentucky Wrecking Crew" had outgrown their leathers, or had insurance problems, or one reason or another had opted not to come out. So it was encouraging to me when 76-year-old Don Drake from Decatur, Illinois showed up.

Don had been there in the pits with me at Daytona this year, and had prepared Ducati's for Kenny Baker to race for years. Don knew what the gearshift problem was right off. The toe on my new boots was thicker than the old boots and not allowing the shift lever to drop down after an upshift, apparently a Ducati requirement. A little adjustment to the shift linkage and problem solved! Then we adjusted the Penske

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rear shock by lengthening it, putting more weight on the front end to help it turn in quicker.

So day 1, race 3 for the Ducati approaches, it's a good clean race and I'm OK with the 4th place finish I take. So taking that 4th, not far behind Tim Lyle, the class points leader showed me again, that the Ducati could compete with the SV650s that dominated the class. We just needed to sort out that suspension a bit.

Next up was the Sound of single race in the 6th, again a racer named Kevin Brown(57). I was pretty pumped up from the Ducati race, I knew this track, the gearing on the Yamaha had seemed a bit short in the straight yesterday, so I had dropped a tooth on the rear the night before and was pretty sure I was optimal for just peaking out in 5th gear at the end of the straight, but still making power at around 8500 rpm. A good start and I was sure I could

show Mr. Brown that last fall at Barber was no fluke. The 6th race went off and Kevin had his typical great start beating me off the line, but I was right behind him and there was no one else there. I followed him into turn 2, 3, and 4. We went on like that till we got to a little stretch of straight after turn 9. Turn 10 is a very sharp 170 degree turn, second gear...just my kind of latebrake'em into the turn, take the inside line and cut-em-off kinda place! It worked, I had taken the lead from Mr. Brown. I ran hard, but he was not done. He followed me down the straight, thru turn 1 and cut me off inside on turn 2. We went around the track again, and again I cut him off in turn 10. We traded leads one more time before I finally took the checkered flag for 2st place with a track time faster than everyone running in the Thruxton class and all the bikes in Battle of Twins F2 except for one, who just clipped me at the finish line.

The Yamaha was great and it was a great race! As good a race as I had, there was a guy out there ahead of me by 3 seconds a lap. He runs a website selling aftermarket parts for converted 450cc dirt bikes, and the bike he ran was tricked out with CNC milled thumb brake/rear brake, and a multitude of other items.

So for Day 2 on the Ducati in the 3rd race, I had to do something about that suspension. The Ducati did not feel planted, would not flick into turns with ease.

We enlisted the aid of another racer to help check the sag on the front end, and it was 1/4"! Well below the recommended 1" - 1 1/4" for a race bike, so we backed off the pre-load on the front springs. Next time out, a world of difference, I couldn't believe it was the same bike. I could turn in, and flick it right and left with ease! Never mind compression dampening, or rebound dampening, lets keep this simple for now. So as race



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3 approached, I had a newfound confidence in the Ducati. The race went off and I got a pretty good start. It was me and Tim Lyle and there was this Buell 1125(167), from another class,

who had lots more power on the straight, but pretty hesitant in the turns.

I was having a real good race with Tim Lyle, we had traded leads twice, but I passed him

again, and there was that Buell. I could get around that Buell, and stick Tim with trying to pass him, it would buy me some time to build a lead Tim could not make up. It worked, and I took 2nd Place!

The Ducati had proved it could compete with anything in the class. I was really pumped up now. I still had the 6th race to go, and was determined to complete my history with Kevin Brown. The public address system was terrible, you could not hear the 3rd call for any race half the time.

So when I got on the starting grid for race 6, I looked for Kevin Brown, and did not see him. I assumed he might have missed the 5 minute board, and they may be making start from the back of the pack. I had seen them do that to him once before, and he back with such vengeance that he won that race. So I knew he was not to be ruled out for that handicap. So when the race went off, I got a good start, and ran hard against a SV650 running in a different class, BOT F2, it was

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Tim Lyle! And again, we traded leads 2-3 times, before I again I passed him, and found that guy on the Buell, passing him, and putting it on Tim to

get around him to catch me. He never did, and even though we were in different classes, it was a good race.

I never saw Kevin Brown, and I took First Place. The guy from GP Tech who had taken First on Saturday had gone home Saturday. Later I found out that Kevin Brown's long time partner, Lila O'Hara, a good racer in her own right, had gone down in the second race, and was at the hospital. Kevin was there with her during the 6th race.

Suddenly my victory seemed a little hollow. Later that day the hospital released her, she had a broken toe, was pretty bruised up, and didn't remember anything of the wreck but was going to be all right.

So the racing was done, and all in all, I was pretty happy with my outing.

There were some stupid oversights, and probably some lucky breaks that never get

credited, but all part of the mix that makes up the weekend adventures.

Thank you all for indulging me the opportunity to relive those "glory days."

—Brian Sawyer
#508

What I saw on my summer vacation

By Paul Elwyn

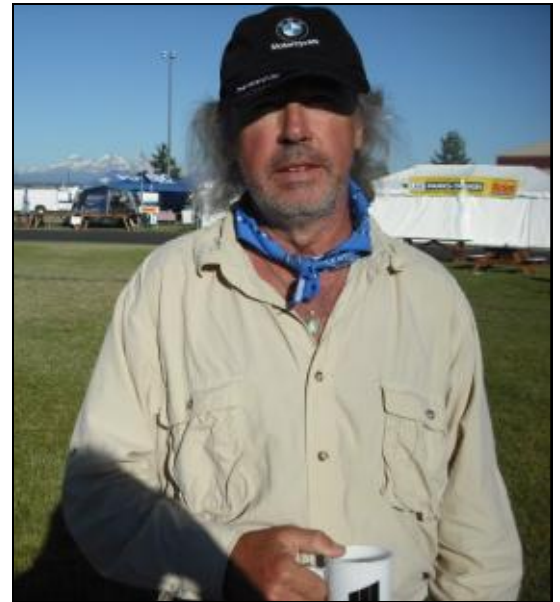


What I saw on my summer vacation



What I saw on my summer vacation

By Paul Elwyn



Roger Trent at the Redmond MOA Rally





Ian Rice, grandson of John Rice, was inspired following his Café Run experience to create the above representation.

Ian Rice on Great-Uncle Jay's R100RT



Vintage Days

impressions
by John Rice

An ambitious seller



Vintage Days

impressions
by John Rice



I know alcohol was involved in the conception.



A physics lesson yet to be learned. Long pivot, moment of angle, rear tire traction, health insurance claim.



Vintage Days

impressions
by John Rice



Someone has found a treasure and is carting it away at the Swap Meet.

Joe Bark's GS blows rear main seal in Yellowstone

Paul,

They had it done in three days in Missoula.

I rented a car and drove on to the rally, and then drove BACK to Missoula to pick up the bike when done on Saturday.

I had one full day at the rally until they called and told me it was completed on Friday evening, so I drove all night back to Missoula and picked it up Saturday morning.

It was then too late to get back to the rally, so Steve and Cindy (bro and sis in law) met me up north and we drove over to see the Olympic Peninsula, Mt. Saint Helens and Rainier, and then started home.

Seventeen days all together, of magnificent views of our Northwest and West.

—Joe Bark



An email note from Joe Bark:

Bark's bike blows its main seal 400 miles from anything right in Yellowstone! Bark rides in tow truck ALL NIGHT to BMW DEALER in Missoula on THEIR DIME (BMW's) dime. Take home message? If you have not gotten the BMW traveler assist program, there is hardly a better investment for a rider!!

Kuvaton.com



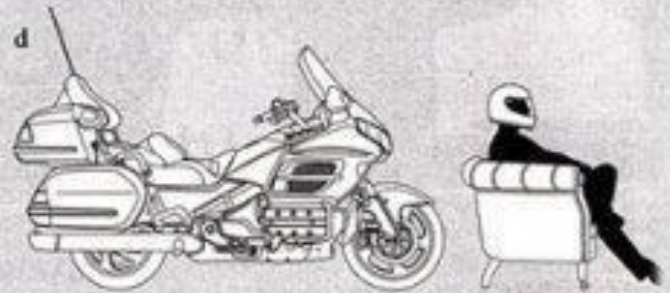
Piaggio, Ciao Achille Castiglioni, Mezzadro - Zanotta



Aprilia, Scarabeo 125 Riccardo Bonner, Laskyava, 300/3



Suzuki, Burgman AN 400 Mario Bellini, Cab - Cassina



Honda, Gold Wing GL 1800 Lucien - Poltronara 14



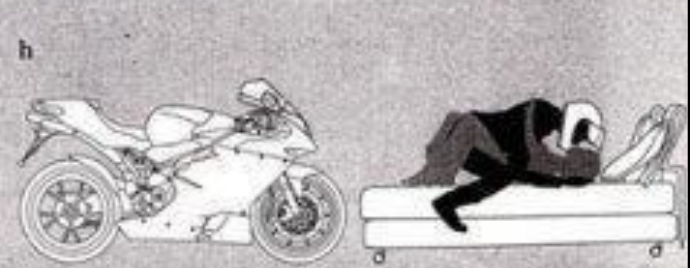
Harley-Davidson, Softail Custom Sedici a sdraio



Honda, CBR 250 Peter Opsvik, Variable Polaris - Stokke



Montesa, Cota 4RT Bruno Munari, per visite brevissime



MV Agusta, F4 750 S Vico Magistretti, Natulie - Flou

Motorcycle Ergonomics, shared by Brian Sawyer

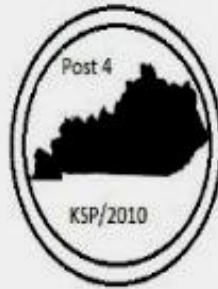
1st Annual Trooper Island Heritage Run

Pre registration is \$30.00 per motorcycle which comes with one food ticket and one shirt. Day of ride cost is \$30.00 without food ticket. First 75 riders day of ride will be given shirts.

**Door prizes and Auction
Items include . Signed
UFC glove, Scorpion Exo
jacket, Gift certificates,
and more**

Food and drinks will be prepared at the final stop. Food tickets can be purchased for \$5.00 and Shirts are \$10.00 while supplies last. Final ride destination will be Jim Beam Distillery in Clermont, Ky.

**All proceeds given to
Trooper Island camp**



**August 8th 2010
Registration Begins
at 9:30 am at the
Kentucky State
Police Post In E-
town. First groups
leave at 10:30 am**

**For ride info contact: (270) 766-5078
Trooper Cory Nokes @ cory.nokes@ky.gov ,or
Trooper Bruce Reeves @ bruce.reeves@ky.gov**

1992 R100GS



1992 R100GS, Red with BMW bags and liners & Multivario tank bag
22,000 Actual Miles
Induralast charging system
PIAA aux lights
Heated Grips
Corbin Solo and Dual Seats (dual seat needs new cover) plus stock seat
Rear rack for solo seat
BMW Tool kit
Tokico 6 piston front brake caliper
CC Products valve covers
CC Products fork brace
Engine and transmission skid plates
Off Road foot pegs
Stock, plus high windscreen
Relocated oil cooler
Brown sidestand

Just tuned with new oil/filter/valves, runs beautifully, oil tight, needs nothing.

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