

November 2010

Apex

Looking Through The Curve

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



The KICKSTAND

Your Motorcycle Parts & Accessories Destination



The KICKSTAND, LLC

500 East Main Street (intersection of highways 33 & 152) / N 37.45.123' - W 84.45.680'

P.O. Box 45, Burgin, KY 40310

Phone - (859)748-KICK / Fax - (859)748-0500 / sceyou@thekickstandllc.com

Hours: Tuesday - Friday 10 - 6 / Saturday 9 - 3 / Closed Sunday & Monday

www.TheKickstandLLC.com



Yes, *another* photo of my bike

Yes, I know,
editorial abuse.

What kind of editor keeps putting photos of his bike in the newsletter? But I enjoy looking at this old thing, and now that it's **RED**...bright, SCREAMING non-original, classic-defiling **RED**, I enjoy looking at this bike even more than I did before when the paint sported 3,126 flaws created by an old man who can't see well enough to know if his black and white socks match.

And, yes, that's my ad on Craigslist. So what?

I can run an ad, can't I? A man's gotta know his limitations, so I'm running an ad.

They say a bike is worth what someone will pay, so I'm finding out what my bike is not worth.

I don't care if it sells. (That's what everyone who wants to

sell says, but it's true for me.)

And I'm gonna run this photo in the newsletter and stare at it, fondly remembering what the old girl was like when she ran without missing, as I finish newsletters so I can install my new dual plug system.

DUAL plugs, again. Twice the firepower exploding against those huge 9.5 pistons time after time! *Mind-disturbing high performance!*

Well, at least with two spark plugs in each head, surely one on each side will spark, ya think?

Anyway, everything I have ever had in my garages through the years has been for sale at some point. Even the '83 R80RT that I bought new and loved and rode 80,000 miles over 8 years I sold. TWICE.

But no one is begging to buy this bike at the price on Craigslist, so I think I'll hang onto it for a while longer and

sink even more money into it.

Friendly weather is slipping away, and I am ready to settle into some work on this bike. It has traveled 5,000 miles without complaint since the rebuild, until it began to miss a couple of weeks ago, about the time....EXACTLY at the time I posted the Craigslist ad.

Condenser is good, and the miss develops with heat, so rather than test the coils (don't want too much knowledge getting in the way), I'll just replace them, and the heads were al-

ready machined for dual plugs.

So, dual plugging, a timing chain, maybe later BMW front and rear suspension/tubeless wheels and Brembo brakes, then maybe an S fairing since I have everything but the actual fairing shell.....

Then I'll paint the RT fairing to sort-of match the rest of the bike.....

Hey, I now have heat in the garage!

I can hardly wait.

—Paul

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

Paul Elwyn, Editor
paul.elwyn@gmail.com

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.**

In the Beginning...

Part 2 See the October issue of Apex for Part 1.



John Rice

Next came a Ducati 250cc Monza, purchased from a young man who was starting a family and putting away such childish things.

It was blue with chrome panels showing through the paint, and was my first really "proper" motorcycle. Looking back, it started me on my path down the Euro-side of things and whetted my appetite for small engines with crisp power in frames that handled.

I learned the joys of dragging footpegs....and the consequences of those pegs, unlike the Cushman's folding footboards, being solidly

mounted. The little overhead cam 15 inchers was fast, for its kind, having nearly 10,000 RPM in its pocket when most of its contemporaries available at the time did well to manage much more than half that.

By my middle teenage years, several friends had also become motorcyclists. None of us adopted the multi-zipper oiled hair persona of the movie "biker." Our collections were eclectic, encompassing everything from a Mustang scooter/motorcycle crossbreed, to various small-bore bikes and even a Triumph or two. One had a Harley Sportster, a monster to us then, though considered in today's bloated view as a "beginner bike."

I traded various things, a tape recorder, etc, for some of the smaller bikes as a lark. I owned briefly a Honda step-through, the iconic bike on which the ads promised I'd meet the nicest people. I don't recall that it improved my social life at all. There was a 50cc Aermacchi, badged as a Harley during that ill-fated partnership, upon which I got an undeserved speeding ticket. I was on my way to school one cold morning, tootling along at the bike's cruising speed of about 25mph, when my friend George, on his 250cc Harley Sprint (another Aermacchi addition to the HD line) zoomed around me in a macho put down, disappearing around the corner and on his way. Moments later I was pulled over by a city cop who ticketed me for going 45 in a 35mph zone, despite my pro-

tests that "it wasn't me, Officer !". I took the ticket to that same police court where I had often been before and told the judge my story. I capped it off by telling him that the bike was parked outside and that if either he or the officer could get it to go that fast, I'd pay the ticket. Amused, if not entirely convinced, the judge let me off.

Billy Bowling got a new bike, a rare thing in our circle, a Puch 60cc

"Scrambler" from the Sears store, ordered special just for him. It was a tall spindly thing, with semi-knobby tires and a 3/4 seat. Like the mo-peds, this one had a two stroke engine, but prodded to life with a real kickstarter, not pedals. Many years later I would learn that this model was in fact a serious off road competitor, used in the various esoteric European events that I'd only seen bits of in Cycle World. But for us, it was just a new bike. It had a 600-mile break in regimen prescribed before one could unleash the awesome 4 or 5 horsepower hidden in that shrouded engine.

This seemed an impossible barrier to our teenage selves, so we hatched a scheme on the spot to overcome it. We would ride all day and all night to get the mileage accomplished in the shortest possible time. Since it was mid-afternoon when the plan emerged, we'd best get started. I on my Monza, George on his Sprint and Billy on the Puch took off at his recommended break-in speed of 25 mph. This was going to take a while. We rode

DUCATI

ohc

MONZA

No other make of motorcycle offers so many successful and modern features as does the new Ducati "Monza" 250cc... Light alloy overhead camshaft single engine with highly polished surfaces... 4-speed gearbox built in unit with the engine... Telescopic front fork... deeply flared full hub front and rear brakes of extra large size... Shimming arm rear suspension with fully adjustable rear shock absorbers... safety guard, comfortable dual-seat, fully adjustable front brake and clutch levers... large headlight, stop/tail light, horn, speedometer, chain stand and "Pilly" side stand all included as standard equipment... Dell'Orto sports carburetor with air-cleaner... Tail-lamp and beautifully chromium plated accessories.

Other exciting DUCATI models include -
 50cc "Falcon"
 80cc "Super Falcon"
 125cc OHV "Brasca"
 250cc OHV "Glamo" Mk-3
 250cc OHV "Scrambler"
 WRITE today - for FREE LITERATURE!

250

BERLINER MOTOR CORPORATION
 Railroad Street And Plant Road, HARRINGTON, VIRGINIA - Near I-66

In the Beginning...

Part 2 See the October issue of Apex for Part 1.

every bit of pavement we knew, finally finding ourselves at about 3 am in Ritter Park above Huntington, West Virginia. It was cold, foggy and we were, even with the boundless energy reserves of teenage boys, exhausted. We went to a gas station to warm up and regroup. Still, the foolishness of the errand had not occurred to us. Eventually we realized, as I have done many times and in many awkward places since, that there were only two choices: Keep going or take up residence here. We got back on the road, arriving home as dawn was breaking over Ashland, still short of the magic mileage....but not by much.

The Ducati was real freedom, capable of speed and distance that far expanded my rambling range. I covered most, if not all, of the backroads in

Boyd and Greenup counties with the occasional foray into far eastern Kentucky. I spent a lot of time on the roads around Huntington, since the Ducati dealer was located there and I often had need for parts and advice. The shifter was controlled by a hairpin spring that returned it to the center position ready for the next gear and that spring seemed to be made of a special brittle metal with a predetermined number of flex cycles before self destruction. (I'm sure my attempts to learn speed-shifting had nothing to do with it). I soon learned to dismantle the cas-

sette-style shifter mechanism quickly, in the dealer's showroom, replacing the spring on the spot. Imagine in this current era, wheeling your bike into the showroom of your local dealer and beginning to take it apart, borrowing his tools in the process. I began to learn the joys of simple exploration, the

etched a groove in my psyche that I still have not escaped.

We had a dragstrip in Proctorville, Ohio, across the river from Huntington, which served as an occasional Saturday amusement. It was a small strip, just a quarter mile ribbon of not-very-smooth as-



pulling into a gas station far from home to fill up and get a candy bar from the dusty rack in front of the mechanical, crank operated cash register and check out the dog-eared posters on the walls, some for odd mechanical aids, miracle potions to pour in old tired engines making them like new again, and some of impossibly pneumatic pinup girls seemingly enthralled to rapture by the automotive device being advertised. Leaving the station with a full tank of gas and nowhere to be at any particular time and no agenda other than to see where that side road goes

phalt and a bit of runoff room at the end. There were bleachers on one side and a rudimentary wooden timing tower overlooking the track. Along the other side were "pits," actually just a series of demarcated spaces along the "pit road" leading to the starting line.

The strip ran mostly local cars, anyone could bring the family sedan here with a white shoe-polish number on the back window and have a go. As a diversion, the owner of the track would run motorcycles, which he called "graveyard ponies" over the tinny loud-speaker, near the end of the day

There weren't classes, as such, just big and little, which had some strange matchups.

Harleys dominated of course, but the little Euro bikes were making some inroads. The crowds (perhaps an overstatement of the attendance) sometimes booed when a "Limey" BSA or Triumph would embarrass the HD's by several lengths at the finish line.

I was there one Saturday on the Monza when my peers began to rag me to compete. We had our own strip, a marked off piece on Rt. 168, and my

little Ducati often won the drags there, so they were eager to see it go against what we all considered real competition. After all, they had numbers on them, didn't they?

I lined up beside a Honda 305 Super Hawk, piloted by another of near my own age. We watched the "Christmas Tree" lights blink down, my first time from this position. The Honda took off in a flurry of noise as I sat there confused because the green light in my lane, the focus of all my attention had not yet come on. When it

did, a split second after the 305's departure, I dumped the clutch and began trying to catch the bike now several lengths down the asphalt. I wound the little 250 as far as it would go in each gear, gaining ground all the while, but still short by a half a bike at the finish line.

As I shut down and headed for the pit row, my disappointment was quickly displaced by dread as I realized that my bike was not running properly. There was a "phtt" noise with each stroke and I couldn't keep it going without some throttle. As I got into our pit area, my friends shouted that I must go back to the line. The

In the Beginning...

Part 2 See the October issue of Apex for Part 1.

Honda had “jumped the light” invalidating the run, and we must do it again.

Still dazed and confused, I potted up to the line again, next to the Honda rider, both of us watching the lights. This time we got off together on green and headed down the strip. The Ducati strained, but still stayed ahead of the Honda all the way to the end. I chopped the throttle and turned down the pit lane.

Back at the pit, I was again urged to go back to the tower, this time to pick up my trophy. It was a tall, wooden pillar with a brass bike and rider on top. The profile was that of a Grand Prix rider, as in the photos of the European racers in Cycle World. This was before everything Bike had to be portrayed as a chopper-esque V-Twin with feet-forward

rider. It was far more professional looking than the reality of the recipient, a skinny, spotty-faced teenager in an ill-fitting vinyl jacket and jeans.

I tied the trophy proudly to the gas tank and we set out across the bridge into Huntington on our way home. Half way across the bridge, I realized that I could not take this prize home to display for to do so would be to admit to my nervous parents that I’d been racing.

The hissing noise continued with each cycle of the piston, telling of the exhaust valve I’d bent on the first ill-fated run. It wasn’t until later that I realized how great the feat of the little Italian single to still prevail over the larger, more powerful Honda even hobbled by this injury. It was as if an injured horse had finished the Derby on

sheer heart alone. I didn’t feel much self satisfaction, though, understanding as I did, that it was the bike that had won, not me.

In 1966, I made the leap to buying a new bike, another Ducati.

This time a Scrambler, a newer model that had come in a bit earlier. It was black, wonderfully shiny black, with a grey headlight no bigger than the palm of my hand and a deeply curved seat.

The crowning piece was the tachometer, a large white-faced circle with no adornment but a black needle for recording the engine’s progress up to the red-marked danger zone at 10,000 RPM.

I don’t recall a speedometer but then there was little use for one with so business-like a tach to focus on. I rode that bike through the summer before I went to college, trying out my new freedom as one who had made it through the rite of pas-

sage of high school. I made longer trips around eastern Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia and developed my passion for exploration of the unknown road.

A girl I was dating invited me to visit with her family as they camped at Jenny Wiley State Park, about 100 miles from my home. I rode the bike there, reveling in the destination on that warm summer day....but when I arrived, it soon became clear that she had neglected to mention to her dad that I would be coming, much less that I would be staying. When the sun went down, her father offered me a lawn chair a respectable distance away from the family quarters. I slept in the chair that night and the next morning, got up early, said my goodbyes and was on the road not long after daylight. It was the beginning of a pattern that I still prefer today.

I recall the twisting road, with the sun rising behind me, enjoying the cool damp air and the perfect joy of being on a motorcycle, far from home (well, relatively far for a 17-year old) with breakfast and my own bed still a good ways off.

The Ducati’s large tachometer face still comes to my mind, needle rising and falling, with the background noise of the little single telling me and the world that it was stronger than it looked.

(To be continued)

Steve Pieratt found a 1962 Sears Allstate Mo-ped, manufactured by Puch...it's the same model and as far as I can tell, virtually indistinguishable from the one I wrote about last month. Paul Rice captured me riding it in the pits at Barber. I felt like I was 14 again....but I sure don't look like I !





For those who got the word and were able to attend, the BMW Motorcycles of Louisville Octoberfest provided a good time for riders offering a free lunch, 50% discounts on BMW apparel, and demo rides.

Lowell Roark, Ray Brooks, and Raymond Montgomery were on hand while I was there, and everyone seemed to be having a good time with fellow enthusiasts and checking out the new BMWs, Vespas, and Harleys.

Operations Director Brett Moxley spent much of the day leading demonstration rides, a tough job but one he was willing to shoulder on the late October Saturday in 80ish temperatures.

With a huge showroom, the dealership's product display might at first glance lead a BMW rider to think that BMW

motorcycles are not well represented in the mix, but they are. In fact, BMW is the featured brand at the entrance and along the entire window front of the building in addition to the BMW-specific segment of the showroom, a placement not arranged simply for the open house, according to Brett. And this was the arrangement when I last visited in the spring.

I decided to buy an oil filter for my '79 Airhead, requesting a hinged non-cooler filter kit, which Jim Davidson in parts efficiently provided, although in a Motor Company bag.

So, if you were not there, you missed an event much like that held at the previous location under Jeff Cooke's ownership, but with more glitter.

Check out the photos.

—Paul Elwyn

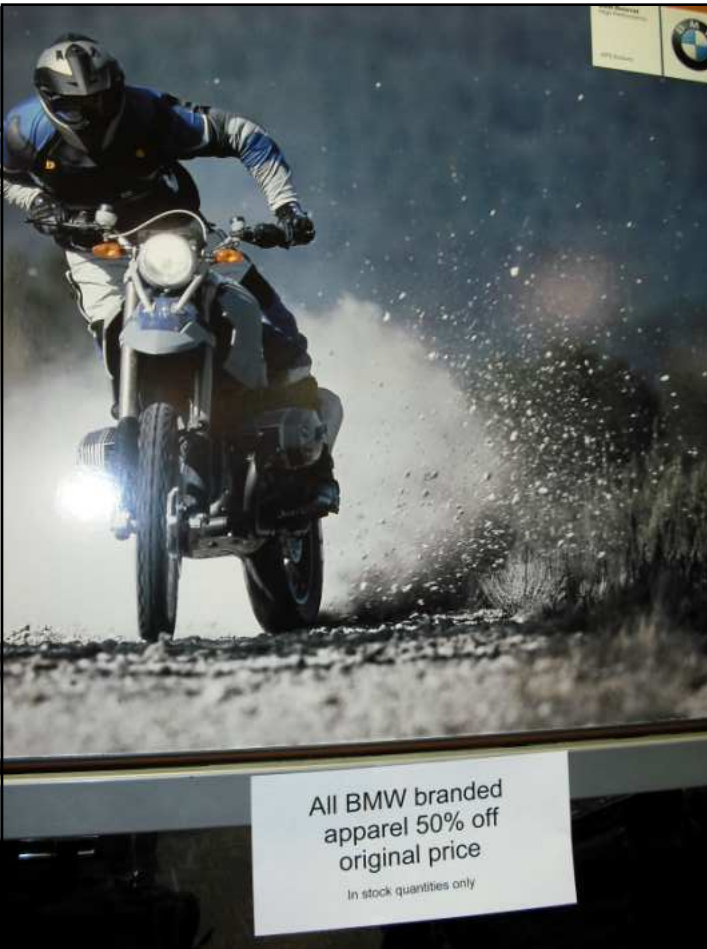


BMW Motorcycles of Louisville Octoberfest



BMW Motorcycles of Louisville

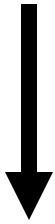
Octoberfest



The next generation

Grandson Ian, age 9, on the TL 125. The bike has been lowered to accommodate his current "height challenge" and has acquired a new exhaust system so that my neighbors don't shoot him or me. He already wants to know when he can compete in a trials event.

—John Rice



↓ Got Milk?



Diana reacts to my efforts to resurrect the Honda.





Rice caught upright in trials event at Barber

Paul Rice caught me during one of my few upright moments during the trials event. I eventually finished 5th with 38 points. The winner had

one, yes, 1, point. Second place was, I think 14 and maybe third was 20-something.

Obviously, I wasn't in the hunt that day. My first

loop score was 15, which put me out of the running. The last two loops were better, but not good enough to overcome my first one. It was the first

time I'd ridden the bike in the woods in two years, since the '08 Barber event.

—John



SHOW BIKES



2010 AHRMA Race Rap-up



Brian Sawyer



Loading up the truck for Barber, October 7, 2010

As my last article for 2010 on racing in the American Historic Racing Motorcycle Association, I will try and keep it brief.

I campaigned two bikes primarily this year, both modern bikes. It is perhaps fitting that my success as a racer this year, may be attributed to NOT racing the vintage BMW. I have long suspected that my mechanic has been the problem to success in the vintage classes. By racing modern classes, I have minimized the negative impact of my mechanic's involvement. I should volunteer that I am that mechanic and I did win the Sound of Singles Class for 450cc on my '08 Yamaha YZ450f.

At Beaverun, Pennsylvania in late July I went down on the other modern bike, the Ducati 800. I broke several ribs and

my collarbone when I lowsided the bike in a tight 180 degree hairpin turn. No other rider was involved and the damage to the bike was fairly minimal.

That was on Saturday, and on Sunday, I was not in good shape to try to race, but the points to win the Sound of Singles race were on the line. So when my race came up, it was pouring down rain. I thought, "Fine," I can race in the rain and it won't be a hard pace. If I go out and complete one lap, I can at least take the points for having entered and if it's a small grid, the points will help. Well somehow, I took the lead at the start, but after leading for four laps, my main competition overtook me.

At that point, I could not give it up, and on the final lap, last turn, he went wide and I came in on the inside and won!

It was a long, painful drive back home that night.

The next round was at Virginia International Raceway (VIR) in early August, just two weeks after Beaverun. The ribs had not healed much, so I scaled my effort back a bit and only took the Yamaha. Racing one bike, one race each day was all I thought I could do.

It paid off, and I came away with two first place finishes that weekend. It also solidified my points total to win the class and outdistance my nearest competitor.

So when the final race of the season at Barber Motorsports came around in early October, I really had nothing to lose. I had time between VIR and Barber to pull the motor on the BMW, replace the main seal and o-ring on the oil pump, and hopefully once and for all clear up the slipping clutch problem.

I replaced the damaged clip-on and body damage to the Ducati from Beaverun. I replaced the water pump seals on the Yamaha that caused the oil to appear in my radiator. All was set to take three bikes to Barber, enter perhaps four different classes with the three bikes, and finally race just for fun! No points to worry about, just get out there and have fun for a change!

So it was all the more poignant when the rider immediately in front of me in that final practice Saturday morning went down for no apparent reason, and as I drove directly for his head, I grabbed all the front brake I could to avoid crushing his helmet with my front wheel...It was over, and the Ducati was lying on my foot. My foot hurt, and I could not

2010 AHRMA Race Rap-up



assessment was seven broken ribs, one broken collarbone, the collapsed lung, the broken foot, and the gash would heal, eventually.

It's been three weeks now at this writing; most of the pain is in the morning when all the medications have worn off. Sleeping is difficult, as I can only lie flat on my back. So as I reflect back on this racing season, and the particle board plaque with vinyl decal proclaiming my Number 1 status for the 2010 season...

Well, honestly, I try not to. Trying to assess the relative merit of the things we do versus the harm or damage they may cost us does not offer value to my decision making or future actions in this case.

I had a good time, I achieved my goal, and hopefully there is no permanent damage.

But next year, we'll have to wait and see.

I've been thinking of taking some time off from racing.

**—Brian Sawyer
#508**

move.

The rider I nearly hit was fine, and lifted the Ducati off my foot. In the ambulance ride back to the pit area, my foot hurt. It was over. I would not race this weekend, I knew that. I just did not know what the damages were. But having been there several times before, I suspected several ribs and maybe more.

I knew I could not take a chance on going to a hospital in Birmingham Alabama. Once admitted, I knew too well the difficulty getting them to release me. I had the truck, the Airstream trailer, and three motorcycles to get back to Kentucky. No one was going to be able to take the time off to stay

with me in Alabama.

I got Jodie Wells (Mike Wells Racing) to drive the truck and trailer back for me, and I rode in moderate discomfort back to Kentucky that Sunday.

On Monday morning, I called several orthopedic offices to see if someone could see me that day and assess the damages. The best I could get was an appointment for Wednesday and this was Monday.

I was having trouble breathing. I believe I had damaged my shoulder, there was a two-inch gash in my heel, about 1/4" deep. So I fired up my Scooter, it's an automatic, and I didn't need my useless left arm. I drove over to the emergency room at Good Samaritan. They

checked me in and transferred me to UK Chandler Medical Center.

The first reading they gave me was I had broken 21 ribs, broken both clavicles (collarbones), collapsed one of my lungs, broken the fifth metatarsal bone in my foot, and needed eight stitches to my heel, only it was two days too late. Well I wasn't buying it, I asked them to verify just the damages from this weekend. They were obviously including the ribs broken two months earlier at Beaverun, and they were fine!

So after about three days in the hospital, they decided the collapsed lung was not life-threatening anymore. The final



BMW Motorcycles of Louisville Charter Dealer Of:

Schuberth 
HEAD PROTECTION TECHNOLOGY

In stock NOW!!!



Schuberth C3

**Silver & Gloss Black
All sizes in stock**

White - Special Order Only
Women's will arrive later this year
Flat Black NOT available until 2011

SRC-System™



**Fully integrated
communication system**

FANTASTIC SAVINGS ON NEW IN STOCK BMW MODELS!

2009 BMW G 450 X

WAS \$8,695

**NOW
\$5,399***



**WE WILL SELL, SERVICE,
AND INSTALL ANYTHING
YOU CAN IMAGINE.**

2010 BMW G 650 GS

WAS \$8,820

**NOW
\$6,995***



2010 BMW F 800 ST

WAS \$13,020

**NOW
\$10,995***



2009 BMW K 1200 LT

WAS \$22,195

**NOW
\$17,995***

ONLY 600 MILES!



**Receive a voice Intercom
system on LT MODELS!
- a \$895 value **See dealer for details.**

*All prices plus tax, title & license. In stock units only.

**CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR
SALES & PROMOTIONS**

www.bmwloouisville.com

