



Michigan Sport Touring Report

September 2017

Editor – Ian Orr

...next year!

By Joe Arozarena

TOTM 2017

The weather and riding at this year's Tip Of The Mitt were so incredible we forgot to get a group picture (of people). Bikes, no problem!



Every day started partly sunny, with temperatures in the mid-60s and ended with more sun and temperatures in the low to mid-80s. The leaves were just starting to change color and a few had fallen. The evening walks to dinner and back were in shorts and T-shirts followed by several hours of storytelling each night. NEWS FLASH: Jan Pennington enjoyed her first ride (albeit as a passenger) since she and her bike parted company back at MR2.



Check out the TOTM pictures on the MSTR Smugmug photo gallery.

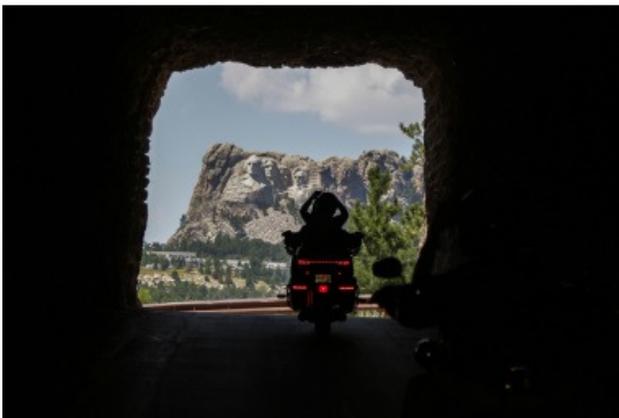
It's been a tough year. My son moved to South Carolina early in January. My wife was diagnosed with breast cancer later than month. My dad passed away in May. You never know what life is going to give you (or take from you) from year to year. That's why riding a motorcycle and taking trips with MSTR is so enjoyable - I can leave the stresses and issues of daily life behind and simply enjoy myself for a few days of riding and time with friends. But unfortunately for me the issues in my personal life this year have conflicted with the normal MSTR trips that I would have taken. My wife's first surgery was around the time of the MoArk and my dad's passing was around the time of the MR2. Other conflicts caused me to miss the Mid-South Odyssey and Blue Grass Boogie. I haven't even been able to attend a monthly meeting since spring. I keep a sport bike at my brother's house in Cincinnati so that I can ride with him occasionally when I'm visiting there, but this year I haven't ridden that bike once. The only bright spot during the year was the prospect of going to Sturgis.

My wife and I and three other couples have an annual motorcycle trip and this year we decided to go to Sturgis. It just so happened that the timing of the Sturgis bike rally came just a couple weeks after my wife's final chemo treatment so the trip became somewhat of a celebration of her getting through that difficult phase of her treatment. Let's be clear... Sturgis is not like an MSTR ride. MSTR is all about spirited riding on very twisty roads and spending the majority of the day in the saddle eating up the miles. That's all good and I enjoy it a lot, but that's not Sturgis. Sturgis is about the sights and the experience of being

amongst tens of thousands of other bikers at one big party.



But let's be clear, Sturgis is also much more than just the town of Sturgis. Sturgis is about the Black Hills, Spearfish Canyon, remote roads in Wyoming, Devil's Tower, Mount Rushmore, the Needles Highway, the Iron Mountain highway, the Badlands, Custer State Park, and much more.



Sure, there is the raunchy side of the bike rally - the girls in pasties or body paint, excessive drinking and people behaving stupidly, bikers doing burnouts, etc. That's what most people think of if they've never actually been to the Black Hills area. But if you go, you'll find a

great deal of natural beauty and many miles of roads to enjoy.

We spent 6 days in the Sturgis area and I rode just over 1,400 miles. It was a very good mix of time on the road and time spent taking in the various sights and activities. Each day we had kickstands up by 9am and normally didn't get back to the cabin until about 12 hours later.



The days were full and very enjoyable. Even the couple of "down" days that we had were entertaining as we spent time in the middle of the Sturgis. If you like people-watching you better bring a LOT of popcorn! And the motorcycles... if you love motorcycles there is eye candy everywhere. Sure, 99% of the bikes are Harleys but they are still great to look at. So many customized bikes, beautiful paint jobs, a few extremely eccentric ones that make you wonder, and just the sheer number of them. It's quite an experience.

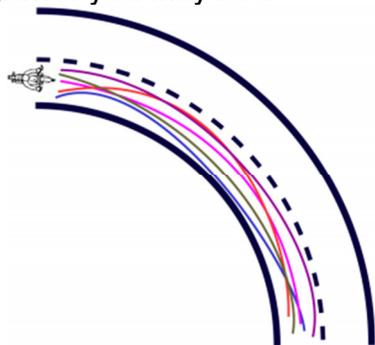
As much as I enjoyed it I still feel cheated out of my MSTR rides. Last year in MoArk was some of the most enjoyable riding I've ever done. I thought this year would be my first Barn Burner Raid but, alas, no such luck. My sights are set on the October ride in West Virginia but based on how the year has gone so far I wouldn't be surprised if something kept me away from that one. But next year... yes, next year will be different. And a thought just occurred to me... what if we combined our annual couples trip with an MSTR ride? The best of both worlds. All the great roads, but a slightly less spirited pace, two-up with our girls. That has some potential.

Getting Through the Curves

By Bill Webb

First, what are my qualifications to write on this important subject? Well, I do not have any serious qualifications. I am not a racer, I am not very fast on the track and I have not stayed at a Holiday Inn Express lately. In 45-years of riding, it has only been the last decade or so, riding behind people that ride better than me, that some road experience has been gained. In other words, you better take my observations with a “grain-of-salt.”

You want the short article...well here it is...use one of the lines below in a curve and you may get through...or you may not.

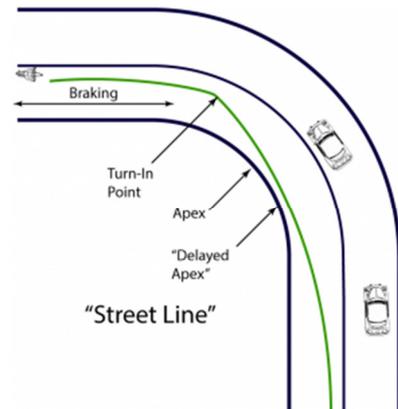


You want more? Let's discuss some of the techniques...

Here is a cornering technique you can stick your head into...



There is a modified racing line, the infamous “outside, inside, outside” path of travel approach previously promoted by a national rider training program. This technique was labeled by some as the “safe-line,” another oxymoron like “honest politician.”



Please imagine we have three identical riders and three identical motorcycles. We start them all off at the same time and they must ride in this hypothetical path until they have a mishap. The first bike must remain in the left track of a lane, the second the center track and the third the right track. Which one will likely crash first? Perhaps the bike in the center track where the oil-drippings are and debris pushed there from cars traveling in the left and right tracks, or perhaps the bike in the right track where we typically see more debris, gravel, grass clippings and road surfaces that are in poorer condition than the other tracks? While we can debate which bike will likely crash first, it is reasonably certain that the center and right track bikes will likely crash before the left track bike. Techniques like this are surely ideal for racers and those on the track, but they are typically riding in a no gravel, no oil, no grass, good pavement predicable environment—unlike real street conditions where every single turn has potential surprises for us.

I can hear some of you now...“Webb, there are some good things about this technique...” Yes, there are--you'd have better visibility going into a left-turn (not the right turn) which allows you slightly more time to change your path because of road conditions and keeps you further from oncoming traffic. This better visibility can also be accomplished by using the right track in left turns and this technique avoids the center track debris. *However*, using this right track technique for left turns necessitates staying in the right tire track to avoid the road debris typical of the right track and this requires a high riding skill level and leaves very little margin for error if you go wide in a left turn.

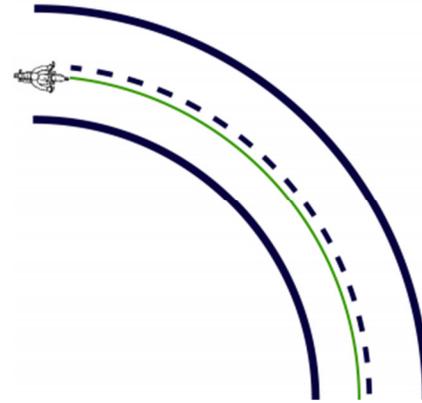
So, you must make your own decision if turning using the center or right tracks of the lane are

safer for you. Of the nine motorcycle accidents I have seen occur directly in front of me, most occurred because of bad surface conditions in either the center or right tracks. The others occurred because the bikes went wide in left-handers, touched the soft shoulder and went down instantly.

Then there is the recent promotion of a “middle-middle-middle” approach. Stay in the middle of a lane. Is this better than the “street-line” approach discussed above? Who cares. While arguably simple, and perhaps okay on the freeway, it is not a grand technique for two-lane twisty roads from a “keep-the-rubber-on-the-road” analysis. Further words will not be wasted on the risks of using this technique.

Now for a short story entitled “Classroom Learning Isn’t Always a Good Thing.” Run the clock back to about 2005; I had just completed training to be a motorcycle coach. I knew it all...the outside-inside-outside path of travel was grand—because that is what I was taught. While riding with the HSTA (Michigan clan) in Kentucky, there was a spirited pace in progress, a beautiful perfect condition blacktop road, beautiful weather. Life was good. The only thing is, I was convinced the riders in front of me did not know what they were doing—they were riding in the left track. Were they morons? I knew better. I rode the outside-inside-outside path until wham, my Street Triple slammed into the pavement while crossing over the center track in a turn. I remember sliding down the street on my buttocks, my bike sliding next to me, wondering why I was doing that... You are getting ahead of the story. Let me tell it myself. Not so much as a tiny stone in the center of the road, BUT, there was an invisible-to-the-eye coating of coal oil—drippings from the coal trucks—that made the center track treacherous. I guess the people in front of me who were turning in the left track had a better technique, an opinion not learned in a classroom but developed from the School of Hard Knocks.

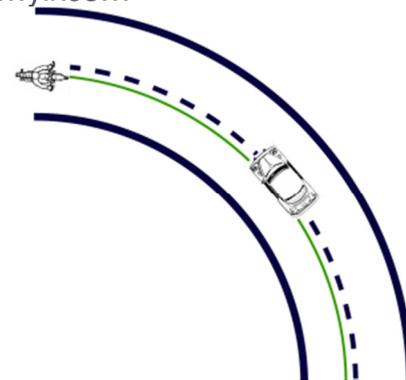
I have shown my hand...you can guess where I am going. So lets see the pros and cons of being a “left-tracker,” staying, *generally* in the left car tire track absent road or traffic conditions that would make taking a different track safer.



It is important to note that there is no such thing as a lane position that is perfect all the time...we must be willing to automatically adjust to road conditions as necessary.

A pro of riding in the left tire track area is the likelihood of less debris. This is a significant safety advantage. Staying in the left-track is also clearly ideal for right turns, increased radius to the turn and maximized visibility through the turn. A con of staying in the left tire track arises in left-turns as there will be a somewhat tighter radius and a little bit more of a flick-in to enter the turn will be necessary.

Any particular line through a corner presents potential problems. Here is a left-track problem...yikes...



Being in the left-track places you at times closer to oncoming traffic. So here you are coming into a right-hander and a vehicle is several feet over the center-line in your lane.

Dealing with this scenario requires continuous mental preparation. You must constantly consider what you would do if you enter a turn only to see a vehicle over the center-line in your lane. The brain is pre-programed on how to handle such emergencies—stare at the emergency—stare at the oncoming car--the result being you drive into the oncoming car. So while riding your motorcycle or in your arm-

chair, constantly test your brain's programming by imagining emergency scenarios and visualize looking to a safe path of travel without de-stabilizing the bike with braking.

The same mental pre-programming applies to getting into a turn too fast and starting to go wide, the brain wants to look at the incorrect track that is taking you to a mishap. YouTube is full of videos with motorcyclists with Go Pros mounted on their helmets showing exactly this problem—they never looked away from the emergency and drove into the oncoming vehicle or drove off the road.

The brain also is pre-programmed to do other bad things, such as grabbing the brakes and/or clutch while going wide in a turn. Staring at the emergency or staring at the track that is taking you to a mishap all constitute GIVING-UP. So, if there is any value to this article it is to remember NEVER GIVE-UP. You must preprogram your brain to look away from the emergency or bad-track and look at a safe exit for the turn and smoothly press the handlebars to take you to that exit point without destabilizing the bike with braking, etc.

So, while there is no perfect track or line that can be utilized all the time, you must decide which track, when road conditions are good, will provide you the best odds for a safe trip through a particular corner. Choose wisely. And you must be mentally committed to never giving up by being prepared to look away from danger to a track of safety. Ride safely.

A special thanks to Joe Arozarena and Bill Webb for their articles featured this month.

Remember... All published articles earn a free breakfast and your articles will be appreciated by your fellow members and the newsletter editor, and you will also earn points toward the **2017 MOTY Award!**



MSTR Heads Up

Here's a listing of some of the upcoming local events and meetings within the next few weeks. If you know of a local motorcycle event in Michigan or Ontario the MSTR would be interested in send Ian Orr an e-mail, with the details, to Communications@mstriders.com.

MSTR EAST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, September 23, 2017, @ 8:30 AM

East breakfast meeting is at **Doc's Sport Retreat** in Livonia, MI. Doc's is located at 19265 Victor Parkway. East of I-275, north of 7 mile road and across from Dave and Buster's. Augie Fernandes will be moderating this meeting.

MSTR WEST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, October 14, 2017, @ 10:00 AM

West breakfast meeting is at the **Alibi Bar & Grill**, 1394 E. Riverside Drive, Ionia, MI (www.alibionia.com). Please send an email to Gala (gschip@me.com) so she can plan on providing breakfast for everyone who attends. Breakfast will be available for \$11 plus tax & tip. Bart Reiter will be moderating this meeting. **Note there will be a special guest and presentation – details to follow!**

MSTR 2017 Rides



One of the goals of the MSTR is to organize a few multi-day rides each year specifically for our members in some of

the premier riding areas in the Midwest and Southeast. All MSTR rides are limited to those who are current MSTRiders. We're winding down our organized rides for 2017 and these are listed on the Events page of the MSTR Website (www.mstriders.com).

2017 MSTR

Deposed Depots Grand Tour

**March 25 – November 19
Michigan**

Keith's 2017 Michigan Deposed Depots Grand Tour is in full swing. There are 14 checkpoints, with 8 in the Lower Peninsula, and 6 in the Upper Peninsula. Additionally, you can earn up to 3 extra credit points for each checkpoint (42 extra credit points total) for stopping to see other Michigan attractions. These can be other depots, museums, historical points of interest, scenic attractions, tourist attractions, and unique Michigan restaurants. All photo proofs of your visits will be due to Keith by Nov. 19.

Organizer: Keith Danielson
keith.danielson@wowway.com

WVR

West Virginia Raid

**October 5 – 8
Lewisburg, West Virginia**

Consider joining your fellow MSTR members on this, the last organized out of state ride for 2017. The schedule and details for this ride are as follows:

Thursday, October 5. Trailer or ride to Marietta, OH. We'll be staying at The Microtel Inn and Suites. A group dinner at 7:00 PM is being arranged for those who arrive in time to take part. Following dinner – around 9:00 PM there will be a mandatory Rider's Meeting at

the motel, where we'll discuss the next days' ride and arrange our riding groups.

NOTE: We are looking for a volunteer(s) to coordinate a breakfast and a "Ride Down" to Marietta for those who may wish to form up groups to ride down together.

Friday, October 6. Our groups will ride a twisty, turn filled route from Marietta, OH to Lewisburg, WV. We will be staying there Friday and Saturday evening at the the Quality Inn in Lewisburg, WV. At 9:00 PM there will be a mandatory Rider's Meeting at the motel, where we'll discuss the next days' ride and make any necessary changes to our riding groups.

Saturday, October 7. Our groups will ride one of several routes/loops from and back to the hotel in Lewisburg, WV

Sunday, October 8. We will ride a 250 mile route, returning to Marietta, OH. From there everyone will either continue riding home or load up their trailers in Marietta and drive home.

If you're interested in joining us, you need to get the following done – **without delay**

1. Make your **Thursday night** reservation at:

**Microtel Inn & Suites
506 Pike Street, Marietta, OH
Phone: 740 373-7373**

2. Make your Friday and Saturday night reservations at:

**Quality Inn
540 North Jefferson Street, Lewisburg, WV
Phone: 304 645-7722**

3. Contact Ian Orr to get your name on the distribution list for Route Maps and further information regarding the trip. There will be a sign-up sheet for this ride at the September breakfast meeting.

Organizer: Ian Orr
Communications@mstriders.com

MSTR Newsletter & Website

The MSTR Newsletter and Website (www.mstriders.com/) belong to you, the riders. They both can only be as good and as interesting as you make them. If you've got something to say about a ride, your bike, perhaps a trip you're planning, whatever, send it in for the newsletter and/or website to:

Ian Orr: Communications@mstriders.com

MSTR Photo Gallery

The MSTR maintains a SmugMug photo gallery (<https://mstriders.smugmug.com/>) to allow riders to upload and download pictures of various club events. Upload and download passwords are sent out to participants for each event. Click on the above link or visit the MSTR website and select the MSTR Photo Gallery link to check out all the event pictures.

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www.collegebikeshop.com/

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www.ducatidetroit.com/

Fox Powersports
www.foxpowersports.com/

You never know what you'll see at the Legs Inn:



One of the routes back from TOTM included a scenic stop at the Lumberman's Memorial, erected in 1932, to recognize the contribution of lumberman to the development of the prairie states.



Please patronize the following businesses owned by your fellow MSTR Members, whenever possible.

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Midwest Motorcyclist
Celebrating 19 Years
August 2017
FREE

2017 Ural Gear Up side car rig

2017 Harley-Davidson Tri-Glide trike

BIG Three-Wheeler Test

Also in this issue:

- Book Review: Stealing Speed
- Classifying the Polaris Slingshot




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