



BMW and Ducati Museum Tours

By: Steve Gross

Last summer, my boss asked me to go to Italy for some meetings. "Italy in June? No thanks," said no one ever, so I packed my bags and hopped on a plane. While I was there, I took the chance to visit the Ducati factory and museum. Then in February, I found myself with a free day in Munich and visited the BMW Museum. Unfortunately the BMW Motorrad factory is in Berlin so I didn't get there on this trip.

Since it's now the end of winter, the riding stories are few and far between maybe this tale of factories and museums will put us in the mood for spring!

Ducati Museum and Factory Tour

Ducati built their factory in Borgo Panigale, on the outskirts of Bologna, in 1935. Originally making radio components, the facility was bombed repeatedly during WWII. After the war, they started making small motors for bicycles, known as the "Cucciolo" or "Little Pup." This led to mopeds, scooters, and finally the motorcycles they are known for today.



Michigan Sport Touring Report

March 2019

Editor – Rachel Durling

I have been inside many modern automobile plants, but they are nothing like the Ducati factory. To start with, the tour is actually on the factory floor side by side with the workers. No catwalks there, watch out for the forklift! Unfortunately, we weren't allowed to take any photos on the tour, so you'll have to settle for photos from just the museum.



Bruno Spaggiari's bike on the left, Paul Smart's on the right

Each engine is assembled in 32 steps. Actually, it's more like 4 groups of 8 steps each. One worker is responsible for each group of 8 steps, pushing the engine along on an assembly cart. The tour guide told us that each full-time engine builder is trained to do all 32 steps for every Ducati engine type, and they rotate regularly to avoid boredom.

Another difference to the typical modern automobile plant has to do with cycle time. For example: at the BMW car plant in Regensburg (Germany), one car is produced every 57 seconds. This means every operation on the assembly line is designed to be completed in 57 seconds or less, except for installing convertible tops which is done in a separate area. I asked the Ducati

tour guide about cycle times. Her answer was, "Each operation is done when it is done." All-righty then! She did mention that they produce about 200 bikes per day with 4 final assembly lines running in parallel. That works out to around one bike every 6 minutes for each line. Her estimate of 200 bikes a day also matches fairly well with Ducati's annual production of about 55,000 bikes.



Then we come to quality. Our guide was very proud to tell us that Ducati's defect rate is only 0.8%, which she compared to the 8% rate they had in the 1980s (which, by the way, was when my Ducati was manufactured). The modern automobile industry measures defects in parts per million, not percent. 0.8% equals 8000 ppm, which would usually indicate an "all hands on deck" quality disaster. Just as the tour guide relayed this statistic, an enormous crash sounded behind us. We all turned to see one of the engine carts on its side, surrounded by a yard sale of valves, pistons, and gears. "It's nothing, don't worry about it," said the tour guide.



BMW Museum

The BMW Museum is split between cars and bikes, but given the audience I'll focus on the bikes. The first BMW motorcycle was the R 32 of 1923. With a boxer motor, shaft drive, and premium pricing, it set a pattern BMW followed for many decades. Another cool early bike was the R 7 prototype from 1934.



BMW 1923 R 32



BMW 1934 R 7

In addition to the production models, there were a lot of vintage race bikes. The RS 255 from 1938 was a supercharged racer, setting the first 100 mph lap at the 1939 Belgian Grand Prix.



BMW 1938 RS 255

The WR 500 was a streamlined version of the RS 255, which set a land speed record in 1937.



BMW 1937 WR 500

There were several sidecar racers including this 1950s 900cc machine, which reused the chassis from a pre-war machine.



But, the displays weren't limited to elderly machines. For example, I saw a modern Paris-Dakar F650 racer, a neat cutaway S1000RR motor, and this 2009 Concept 6 inline six cylinder bike which led to the K1600 bikes.



If you find yourself with a few hours to kill in Munich, you could do worse than visiting the BMW Museum. Don't forget to go across the street to BMW Welt, a huge car and bike showroom with the requisite "lifestyle" accessory shop and, for some reason, also a furniture store.



BMW 2014 HP4 at BMW Welt

Going Slow in the Fast Lane

By: Chip Ashton

In the past few years, I have heard about other groups average speeds during the day, "We did 49 – 50 mph average". I believe they are omitting the one objective and that is having a safe ride. I have found that riding at a slower pace has let me enjoy the ride as much as the fast crowd without as many "oh sh*t" moments as before.



On the last few rides, myself and others have had great rides and good times enjoying a leisurely pace. I believe that if more members rode at a slower pace they would enjoy the ride as much as I do, as have the people that I have ridden with. I am not saying to go slower

but I am saying you should not worry about how fast you have gone or what your highest speed was for the day, just go out there and have fun at whatever speed you want to go, come back safe and in one piece, both the bike and the rider. See you on the road.

A special thanks to **Steve Gross and Chip Ashton** for their articles and pictures featured this month.

Remember... All published articles earn a free breakfast, entry into the year-end newsletter drawing AND your articles will be appreciated by your fellow members and the newsletter editor, and you will also earn points toward the **2019 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 Rachel Durling an e-mail at Communications@mstriders.com with the details.

There have been some changes to the MSTR emails and website. The MSTR website is now secure so it is more searchable online; and the old URL will automatically redirect users to the secure version.

The club emails have also changed as follows:

Newsletter Editor
Rachel Durling –
communications@mstriders.com

Ridership
Keith Danielson – ridership2@mstriders.com
Ian Orr – ridership@mstriders.com

MSTR EAST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, March 23rd, 2019, @ 9:00 AM

East breakfast meeting is at **George Murphy's at the Creek**, 36000 W. Seven Mile Road, Livonia, MI 48152.

MSTR WEST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, April 13th, 2019, @ 9:00 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. Keith Danielson will be moderating this meeting. Breakfast will be available for \$11 plus tax & tip.



MSTR 2019 Rides

Early 2019 rides are listed below. Please check the MSTR website for the list of the rides and events for rest of the year. The dates for the events have already been set and are listed on the Events page of the MSTR website (www.mstriders.com)

MoArk Adventure 12

April 17- 20, 2019 (Easter Weekend)
Missouri/Arkansas

This ride is a “curve-chaser’s” delight. It’s three days of riding with 1,000 tire-shredding miles in the Ozarks to start out your riding season.

Check your tires for tread prior to this ride, the roads here will chew them up aggressively. Many riders have shown up with “I think” tires and ended up buying expensive tires mid-ride

and losing a day of riding. If in doubt, get new tires.

Ride HQ: Day 1 (April 17)

Holiday Inn Express (www.hiexpress.com)
820 Market St, Farmington, MO 63640
Farmington, MO, 63640.
Phone: [573-701-0505](tel:573-701-0505)

NOTE – If you wish to save a few bucks on your hotel in Farmington, MO the Super 8 where we have stayed previously is right next to the Holiday Inn Express.

Ride HQ: Days 2 & 3 (April 18 & 19)

Quality Inn and Suites
(<https://www.choicehotels.com>)
Formerly Comfort Inn
1031 Highland Circle, Mountain Home, AR,
7265.
Phone: [870-424-9000](tel:870-424-9000).

This ride begins in Farmington, MO. We'll meet there for dinner on Wednesday, April 17. There will be a mandatory rider's meeting at the Holiday Inn Express around 9:00 PM following a dinner at Dexter BBQ (next door to the hotel). On Thursday morning, we'll be taking a twisty route from Farmington, MO to Mountain Home, AR. We'll be staying Thursday, April 18 and Friday, April 19 at the Quality Inn in Mountain Home, AR. On Friday we'll be riding on some of the best roads in Arkansas that are south and west of Mountain Home. We'll return to Farmington, MO from Mountain Home on Saturday, April 20. (Easter is on Sunday April 21)

Special room rates have NOT been negotiated for the hotel stays.

To join us for MoArk 12 get your name on the sign-up list of those planning to attend at any of our monthly meetings or send an email to Gregg as noted below. Be sure to make your hotel reservations early. Event information including: Rider Information, Packages and GPS routes will only be sent to those who have signed up.

Ride Organizer: Gregg Mitchell
Email: g.mitchell0549@gmail.com

2019 Half-K Ride

Saturday May 4, 2019

"If you wait, all that happens is that you get older."
Larry McMurtry

So, let's not wait! The 2019 Half-K Ride is on Saturday, May 4th. This has been a great season opener for many, an enjoyable first day-long ride, suitable for clearing cobwebs, both physical and mental. If you're thinking of doing the annual Roughrider (1K, 24hrs), it's a nice warm-up. Have no fear, most years we don't even do an honest Half-K. It just sounds good. As a general overview for those new to this ride, 15-20-minute stops are planned roughly every 90 miles; an hour (or so) for lunch; with various tourist stops along the way. I design the route each year to be around 375-400 miles. It's a relaxed day-ride that has most folks back home by 6:00pm.

The week before the event attendees will receive an information packet by email, including PDF instructions along with a GPX file for your GPS units.

Meet Location:

Plymouth Coffee Bean Company
(Opens 7:00am)
884 Penniman
Plymouth, MI 48170
Bus: (734) 454-0178
Direct Phone: (734) 845-1445

Meet Time:

No Later than 8:15am for logistics and riders meeting.

If you want food, PCB provides typical café type pastries. They also do a range of cook-to-order crepes that are popular. Recommend you arrive no later than 7:30. If there's a line, you don't want food showing up late. They're generally pretty good. I give them a heads-up the week before so they can adjust staffing based on projected participants.

DEPARTURE: 8:30am, Saturday, May 4

SIGN-UP Optional: Sign-up on the event page on Facebook: [Half-K Ride Facebook Signup](#)

This helps others see who is going, drives momentum for others 'on the fence.'

Required: Fill out the form at:

Half-K Information Form. This will ensure I get the correct info and your email for the data files. If you get this link via print, visit the Facebook link instead. The link is there as well and easier to type in as a way to leap-frog to the registration form.

Friends and MSTR recruits are welcome. This is an Open event. You are encouraged to bring your friends. Bring potential recruits. Use this event to show them how we behave, what it's like to socialize with a group of like-minded folks, and just how much fun they can have. Over the years we've had many a new member join as a result of joining us on this event.

So, make sure to mark your calendars! This year, the event will be a go, regardless of the 'forecast.'

Group Leads: We ride in groups of 4-6. Each group needs a point person. Without group leaders this type of event just doesn't work. If you're interested in helping in this important role, please let me know. Typically, I need 4-7 each year.

Remember: A bike on the road is worth two in the shed.

Ride Organizer: JT Pedersen

3rd Annual Ladies of the MSTR Ride

Sunday May 5, 2019 10:00am

Meet up at Zukey Lake Tavern at 10:00am 5011 Girard Dr, Pinckney, MI 48169 (off of M-36) for breakfast buffet and omelet station.

We will ride out and around Stockbridge after breakfast, likely stop at Gee Farms. Contact Sue Ozimek at srozimek@gmail.com to sign up or sign up at the next MSTR meeting.



Michigan Renegade Mountain Ride May 12–18, 2019 Waynesville, NC

There will be two days of travel and five days of riding on some of the best motorcycle roads in the US. We stay at one location and, each day, chose from any one of 20 different routes. Most riders will ride anywhere from 1,000 to 1,500 miles so be sure to have good tires with lots of tread.

Ride HQ: All week
Best Western Smoky Mountain Inn
130 Shiloh Trail, Waynesville, North Carolina
28786
Phone: 828-456-4402

A block of rooms are being held as follows:

- Check-in: On Sunday, May 12, check-out on: Saturday, May 18.
- \$75/night + tax. Same rate for King and Double, 24hr cancellation. The Inn may also allow you to book early and stay later at this rate - you might need to sweet talk them a bit. Request the MSTRiders rooms and rate
- All the rooms at the back of the Inn are blocked from May 12 to May 18. These rooms are only available for participants who book the entire week. If you are not staying the entire week please book a room at the front, upper level, which all have quick access to the back of the hotel through breezeways. If you prefer you can also book at the front on the lower level.

The ride begins in Waynesville, NC. There will be a mandatory rider's meeting at the hotel on Sunday, May 12 at 7 or 8pm (depending on attendance) and then each evening until Friday.

The hotel owner graciously added a BBQ grill for our use, so about one week before the event starts I'll pick one warm and dry evening to have an onsite group cookout. Those who want to join in can either bring their own food for the cookout or, as we did last year, pick it up at a local grocery store.

To join us for **mr²** get your name on the sign-up list of those planning to attend at any of our monthly meetings or send an email to Ian as noted below. Be sure to make your hotel reservations early. Event information including Rider Information Packages and GPS routes will only be sent to those who have signed up.

Ride Organizer: Ian Orr
ridership@mstriders.com

MSTR ROUGHRIDER 1000 VIII

**“Cumberland Mountain Bootleggers
Run”**

Saturday, June 1, 2019

Here we go again folks. The eighth annual MSTR Roughrider 1000. All you will need is a bike, about 25 gallons of gas, money for lunch, and the tenacity of a teenager. We start early in the morning and you should be home in plenty of time to get a good night's sleep the same night.

Many thoughts cross the mind of those offered the opportunity to make a 1000 mile motorcycle ride in one day; “that's crazy”, “not for me”, “never thought of doing it”, “I always wanted to try”, “I'm doing it”!

This is not a race or a ride for everybody. It's a motorcycling adventure, characterized by a self-competitive excitement, whose end goal is to complete a 1000 mile ride in less than 24 hours. It provides the allure and discipline of riding an event we don't usually undertake in our regular riding activities, and it will test the skill and concentration of all those who accept the challenge.

This year's ride will begin in Novi, Michigan and continue thru the Cumberland Gap and Mountains of Kentucky and Tennessee. There will be a sign-up sheet and more details over the next four months. If you decide to ride, welcome aboard.

Ride Organizer: Terry Odom
Email: tiopc1@gmail.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:

Rachel Durling:
(communications@mstriders.com)



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www.hondasuzukiofwarren.com

BMW Detroit
www.bmwdetroit.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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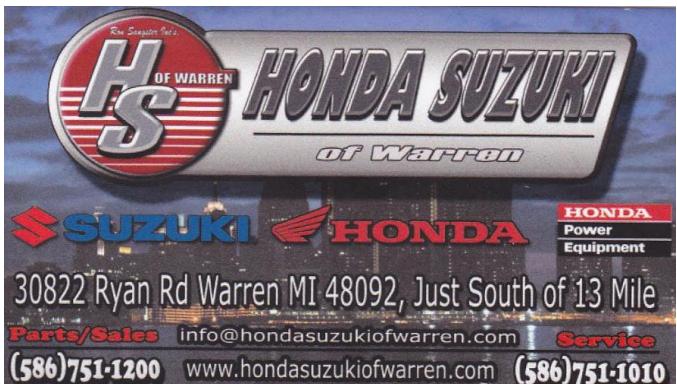


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