



Michigan Sport Touring Report

June 2019

Editor – Rachel Durling

2019 7 Ranges Ride Report

24 Riders completed the 2019 version of the Seven Ranges Ride. If you were sitting at home looking at the weather forecast, you would have thought it would be a washout, but as often happens, the weather and the riding were better than expected.

Although some riders had some rain on the way down on Thursday, the 6 riders that came a day early and rode a route on Thursday had a little more than damp roads to deal with. We were enjoying our lunch at St. Mary's when a freight train rolled down main street (keep an eye on the 7R2 Smugmug page for pictures), followed by a 10 minute rain storm, but nobody got wet. Friday was a beautiful blue bowl of sky and comfortable temperatures all day. Saturday was cloudy with a few random rain drops, but no real rain for most of us. Even Sunday morning started out just damp roads, although we ran into rain on the way home.

The majority of the riders thought Wheeling was a better base than St. Clairsville. There were several interesting restaurants to try and the hotel, although a bit pricey was very nice. The hotel staff was friendly and helpful and the atmosphere was much more relaxed than last year.

A thumbs up goes to Max and Rachel who couldn't get time off, so they worked a full day Friday, drove down late Friday night, and rode Saturday. Way to go.

Another thumbs up goes to Roy Winseck and Ken Snodgrass who took route of exploration

and added the optional side trip. Roy's comment was that he enjoyed the route but was full up on little roads. The biggest part of their adventure was the visit to the Golden Temple of Krishna. They spent 3 hours visiting all the buildings and having dinner at the restaurant. Most definitely visit the Smugmug page to see their pictures.



Becky's First Motorcycle Trip

By: Joe Arozarena

As we loaded my Yamaha FJ-09 and Becky's Honda Shadow onto my trailer for a trip to North Carolina I couldn't help wondering if we'd return with the bikes in the same condition, or if Becky's Shadow might come back a mere shadow of its former self. I tried not to think about any potential harm to Becky herself. It was just a few short years ago that I took my son down to North Carolina for his very first experience on the twisty mountain roads and that trip resulted in a visit to a bike shop in Asheville, NC for some front-end alignment repair. Was Becky ready for this challenge? I honestly wasn't sure.

It has been almost exactly one year since Becky took her endorsement class. She had one

season of riding her 250cc starter bike on mostly suburban Michigan roads and one season of learning the basics, but nothing difficult or challenging. In November of last year she upgraded to her 750cc Shadow but had only a handful of opportunities to ride in the early spring on local roads. What lay ahead in North Carolina was going to be unlike anything she'd done before, and yet, it was necessary if she was going to improve as a rider.

I remember very clearly how challenging my first MSTR ride was. I bought my first motorcycle in 1982 and after all these years I thought I knew how to ride, but I was wrong. When I got on some mountain roads for my first MR2 excursion it was a real eye-opener as to how little I really knew. Those 3 days of riding were quite an education and I increased my knowledge and ability far beyond what I could have expected. I was hoping the same would be true for Becky's experience on our trip.

We ventured out in the early evening after arriving in Blowing Rock, NC. The Blue Ridge Parkway was less than a mile from the hotel and I thought it would be a fun evening ride for us. But anyone who has been on the Parkway knows that there can be some serious fog in the mornings and evenings, and that was the case for us. We rode about ten miles through some substantial fog before deciding that we'd be better off waiting for better weather the next day.

Saturday we got back on the Parkway and headed south with much better weather – mostly sunny and a high of 73. With the help of a pair of Bluetooth headsets I tried to coach Becky on how to approach and get through the many twists, turns and sweeps that we encountered. Once you've become experienced in leaning into a turn it's difficult to put yourself into the mindset of someone who has never done it. It's one of those things that you have to do in order to understand; you can't just read the book. But those first few experiences with doing it can be intimidating. We rode for a couple hours until we reached our destination of Catawba Falls for a nice mid-day hike. After the hike and some tasty barbecue, we were on the bikes and heading back to the hotel. In total it

was roughly a 4 hour ride – far more than anything Becky had previously done. She handled it all very well and learned a great deal in a short amount of time.



Sunday was even more of a challenge, some intentional, some not. We set Bristol TN/VA as our destination. What I did not realize when I mapped the route was that it took us along a piece of road known as "The Snake." I'm pretty certain that if Becky knew how many curves the Snake had, she'd have opted for a different route, but once we were on it there was no choice but to get through it. In hindsight I think it was a great experience for her. There were many tight turns and a couple hairpin turns that really challenged her. Uphill turns, downhill turns, she handled it all and now has a level of confidence that she didn't have before. The entire trip had us on the bikes for over 5 hours and at that point Becky was done with riding, it was time for walking and shopping!



Thankfully, we arrived home without any mechanical or personal incidents. Becky had passed her first real riding test and I'm sure she will now be disappointed with the preponderance of straight, uninteresting roads near her home. Before long I expect she'll be asking to travel south in search of some curves and another lesson in her ongoing riding education. Maybe her first official MSTR ride?

Three Secrets to Turning

By: Bill Webb

If you want to generate some "discussion" with your fellow motorcyclists, tell them you have a question for them about how to turn a motorcycle and propose the following..."put your arms out like you are seated on your motorcycle and holding your motorcycle's handlebars, imagine you are traveling at 40 mph. Show me how you would position your arms and how you would press the handlebars to make a right turn." A cautionary note at this point, however, is in order. Having asked this question of numerous experienced riders over the course of many years has brought the realization that there can be strongly held views on the possible answers. The answer comes in multiple parts.

Secret 1, Arm Position

A short story, in 2006, I took a class in Keith Code's California Super Bike School. The hourly schedule was typically 20-minutes of off the track instruction, 20-minutes on the track instruction and a 20-minute break. This was repeated through the day. At one of the 20-minute off the track instruction segments I was sent with my bike, with others, for a parking lot exercise. The Coach asked me to ride my bike at a moderate speed to the end of the parking lot, making some gentle turns, turn around and come back to him doing the same. How could I screw this up? After completing this short exercise, the Coach then asked, "How do you turn a motorcycle?" I was confident I knew the answer: SLOW to an appropriate entry speed, LOOK through your turn, PRESS on the handlebar and ROLL ON the power. Slow, look, press and roll. I bristled with pride when the Coach acknowledged my answer was correct.

The bristling with pride diminished when he went on to say that my technique of having my forearm at more or less a 45-degree angle, somewhat rigid, from my elbow to the handlebars required the use of more energy than was needed and, thus, impaired a smooth turn entry. The picture below is an example.



The Coach suggested that when making turns my posture be adjusted slightly such that my forearms were parallel with the ground coming straight-back from the handlebar grip and that the result would be less input energy to turn and smoother turns. Easier turning is smoother and potentially faster turning. For example:



The Coach asked me to report back to him how it worked out after my next track segment. I was confident that the technique change would make no difference. I was mistaken. My analogy to him was that it was like the difference between driving a car very slowly with power-steering versus driving one without power-steering. The later requires more work. The difference is very noticeable. I have never looked back to using any other technique. It is

not being suggested that the foregoing turning posture position is appropriate for all riding situations, but when you are in the twisties, it makes turning a lot easier, smoother and fun. Consider giving a try.

Secret 2 – Input to the Handlebars.

The typical answers to the question in the first paragraph above about how to move your arms when initiating a right turn at 40mph have been: 1) the person will gesture moving his/her left hand forward, thus turning the front wheel to the right to turn right; or, 2) the person moving his/her right hand forward, thus turning the front wheel to the left. Some people will lean to the right and not move the handlebars at all. The answer is not subject to debate, it only works one way. There are basically two types of turns: “handlebar turns” and “counter steering turns.” “Handlebar” turns are those which we would use when moving at more or less a walking speed, perhaps in a parking lot, where the front wheel is actually turned to the right to make a right turn. However, once exceeding that very slow walking speed, we no longer have a choice. If you want to turn right, you must make a “counter steering” turn; therefore, the answer to the question, when moving at 40mph, is that you must “press right to go right,” thus turning the front wheel to the left, to initiate the counter steering right turn. Press right to go right, press left to go left.

Secret 3 – Never Give-Up

We do not need the skillset of a motorcycle racer to take a racer-prep course as such courses can be great fun and educational because they are focused on technique rather than traveling at racing speeds. During a training day with Team Chicago at the Grattan Raceway, my Coach, an experienced racer, was wearing a shirt that said “never give up.” I queried if that saying had something to do with motorcycling. “Oh yes” the coach replied, the saying was all to do with motorcycle turns. He pointed out that all motorcyclists will inevitably get into turns and have a startling realization that they are going TOO FAST for the turn but, irrespective of that realization, we must continue to look at our exit point and smoothly apply the control pressures needed to take us to that exit, otherwise, we will

have given up. Keith Code¹ has indicated that survival reactions are perhaps “...the source of 100 percent of all rider errors.” He points out that typical survival reactions are: rolling off the gas, tightening on the bars, tunnel vision, fixed attention on the wrong thing with resulting steering in that direction and braking errors. Imagine one of those unexpected decreasing radius turns or, as you enter a turn, you see an oncoming truck that has come several feet across the centerline into your lane. Our minds will automatically want to implement the “survival reactions” outlined above in such stressful situations. We must mentally practice ahead of time not giving in to those survival reactions. If we fall victim to survival reactions in a turn, the results will typically be an excursion into oncoming traffic or off the roadway. We must regularly mentally imagine getting into a turn and visualizing a stressful event occurring, perhaps because we sense our speed is too fast, and then mentally practicing what we are going to do about it. Instead of falling victim to survival reactions, we must visualize looking to a point that will give us a safe exit from the turn, not looking at the encroaching truck or a track that will take us into harms-way and then smoothly pressing the handlebar to take us to the safe exit. Otherwise, we run the risk of becoming a “survival reaction” victim. The Air Force publishes a safety publication in which it sets forth a few sentences surrounding the scenarios of accidents that have occurred to Airmen. In the motorcycle section, a common scenario is that the motorcycle went over the centerline and was struck by an oncoming pickup truck. To the extent that rider error was present in any of those accidents, is Keith Code correct that 100% of those rider errors were caused by “survival reactions?” If so, then it is a worthwhile mental exercise to practice how we will physically and mentally override those survival reactions in different scenarios. There are not many riders that can take their bikes to the edge of a motorcycle’s capability. Therefore, the Racer’s advice to “never give-up” and continue the turn is the concept that it is much safer if we pre-program our mind to look away from an impending problem and look instead to a safe exit point and continue to smoothly execute the turn, rather than giving-up using the

survival reactions our mind will want to implement. Combining the secrets above takes some mental and riding practice, but the potential rewards in safety and riding pleasure are worth the effort. When you see the twisties coming, you tell yourself to relax, of course, but also relax your posture a bit to have your forearm parallel with the ground from the handgrip to your elbow, smoothly press right to go right or press left to go left and mentally practice never giving-up in a turn with “survival reactions.” Keith Code observed that, “...pushing through survival reactions makes you feel good...” and embraces the Racer’s concept of “never give up.” Ride safe to ride again.

1A Twist of the Wrist Volume II, the Basics of High Performance Motorcycle Riding by Keith Code. This book is recommended reading as it provides detailed information on the subject of riding techniques.

Comments may be sent to webbww@gmail.com.

A special thanks to **Joe Arozarena, and Bill Webb** 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 fellow members and the newsletter editor will appreciate your articles. You will also earn points toward the **2019 MOTY Award!**



MSTR Heads Up

Here is 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.



Flanders Fest is a Vintage Motorcycle Event in Chelsea, August 4th, 2019 at 10:00 – A vintage motorcycle ride to remember Art Farley. Noon – Vintage motorcycles on display at the Chelsea Train Depot – Food and drink available Of course, the Flanders 4 that was made in Chelsea will be on display. If you would like to see how motorcycles were made 100 years ago, come on out and take a look at the old bikes. Even better, come a little early and hear the vintage bikes arrive back from their ride.

MSTR ROUGHRIDER

1000 VIII

“Cumberland Mountain Bootleggers Run”

Notice: Please be advised that the Awards and T-shirts will be given out on August 24th at the East MSTR meeting.

MSTR EAST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, June 22nd, 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, July 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

Most 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)



This year Keith Danielson's Grand Tour will take you on a Michigan journey to see some of Michigan's historic state parks at your own leisure throughout the spring, summer and fall.

You must have your pictures in to Keith by November 24th, 2019. Please see MSTRiders.com under events for more information.

Ride organizer: Keith Danielson

MSO

Mid South Odyssey

July 18 - 21, 2019

Join us in Middlesboro, KY to ride some great roads in SE KY and NE Tennessee. The following hotel will be **ride headquarters**: Sleep Inn & Suites Address: 1260 N 12th Street Phone: (606) 576-7829.

Sign-up sheet for the ride will be at the meetings.

Ride Organizer: Kelly McCrystal

BBR 4

Barn Burn Ride 4

August 15-18, 2019

We will have 2 days of riding the roads of southeast Ohio and West Virginia, with about 10 different routes to choose from. In addition, we'll offer pre-rides down from Toledo on Thursday and back on Sunday for those who ride to the event.

**Ride HQ: Baymont Inn and Suites, in Marietta
phone (740) 374-9660**

We have a block of rooms reserved, with some available starting on Wednesday, August 14 for those who want to get down there earlier. The MSTR rate will be \$74.99 per night plus tax, which is the same rate that we had last year.

This is the same hotel that we stayed at last year (was Best Western last year), but it is under new management. Brent, the manager, assures me that he is aware of the complaints that we had last year, and is doing and will do everything in his power to make sure that we have a pleasant stay this year. Last year the stove was broken and they were unable to provide the usual hot breakfast, but this year we will have hot

breakfasts available, as well as the outdoor pool to relax and cool off after a great day of riding.

There will be mandatory riders' meetings on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings to form groups for riding the next day.

The hotel is ready to begin taking your reservation. Call now to make sure your spot is reserved. As it is every year, this is a great area to ride in, and it is one of the closest places we visit to ride. It promises to be another great weekend of riding shared with some of your best motorcycling friends. Don't miss it!

Ride organizer: Keith Danielson

Tip of the Mitt

September 12-15

September 12th is the day we head out to Bellaire for a romp in northwest MI. This is three-night event. We spend our nights at the Bellaire Inn. Knowing you will be attending the event will make me happy to know so.

Some of us gather for breakfast in Highland MI for the start north. Some of us will ride solo or pair up. It's all good, no matter how you wish to go. We go home on Sunday. Typically, many of our past participants take off whenever they feel like it, choosing a route they prefer.

Call Debbie Dailey at the Bellaire Inn to book your room. 231-533-7777. If she does not answer leave a message. Let her know you are with MSTR. The sooner the better. (Paddle Antrim is also going on that weekend) There is a 7-day cancellation policy (so set your calendars to remind yourself).

Typically ride routes are prepared for the Leelanau Peninsula (Pinky Finger), the Leggs Inn (Ring Finger), the Bridge (Middle Finger). Our friend Bob Komjathy is going to help us out with that.

We have plenty of Bellaire Restaurants, to make your choice for your late afternoon and evening fulfillment of food and drink. All of this is fifteen-minute walk from the Inn.

The restaurant next door is closed right now. That makes getting a breakfast a little more troublesome since we are accustomed to heading over there before donning our gear for our rides. Therefore, I have been speaking with Christina and Alan Balko, who own the Market M88 to cater bakery items and coffee to the Bellaire Inn Friday and Saturday morning. Any thoughts about this; share them with me.

Sign-up at the next meeting and/or send me message that you wish to be a part of this.

Ride Organizer: Peter Stephan
Rideamotorcycle@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 have something to say about a ride, your bike, perhaps a trip you are planning, whatever, send it in for the newsletter and/or website to:

Rachel Durling:
communications@mstriders.com



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MSTR Photo Gallery

The MSTR maintains a Smug Mug 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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