



Michigan Sport Touring Report

November 2019

Editor – Rachel Durling

The Forbidden Zone

By Jac Brown

I like to explore and ride in new places. Especially if the roads are good. So to change pace a little, 7R2 is going on a little holiday. Instead, we are going someplace new for the June ride.

Join me for a ride into the *Forbidden Zone*.

No, this is not like in the movies where the Forbidden Zone is a nuclear wasteland. This time, the danger is that radar detectors are illegal and there are nasty, sneaky speed cops. That's right, I'm talking about Virginia.

Some of our members have had bad riding experiences in Virginia. For them, there is a red line drawn around the state border and a big sign on the map that reads, "Here be Dragons". I don't expect those folks will be joining this ride. That group aside, here has been my experience in the Commonwealth of Virginia. First, I'll talk about the stuff people are worried about.

Police

Radar detectors are not allowed and they will confiscate it if they catch you using one or have it in easy reach. I put mine away in my panniers.

The cops do aggressively patrol for speeders using a combination of airplanes, radar, hiding places, and very sneaky unmarked cars. Among the unmarked cars I have seen an older baby blue SUV, a silver pickup, and an old FWD Impala. Each contained a fully

uniformed police officer, complete with Smokey bear hat.

The thing is, they mainly patrol on freeways, followed by busy main highways and cities/towns. On the twisty back roads that we enjoy, I have never seen a cop in thousands of miles of riding in Virginia.

Of course, there is always that one town with a reputation for a speed trap. Think Gauley Bridge, WV from 10 years ago. In this case, Tazwell is known its 35 mph zone that extends way out of town and the police using that for revenue but once you know about it, it's easy to manage.

How do I ride in Virginia? On the freeway, busy highway, or in town, I ride the speed limit. On the fun back roads, I show some courtesy to the local drivers and ride the corners as quickly as I want. Of course, my speed isn't as fast as some others in the group, so I may not attract attention the way that others might.



Weather

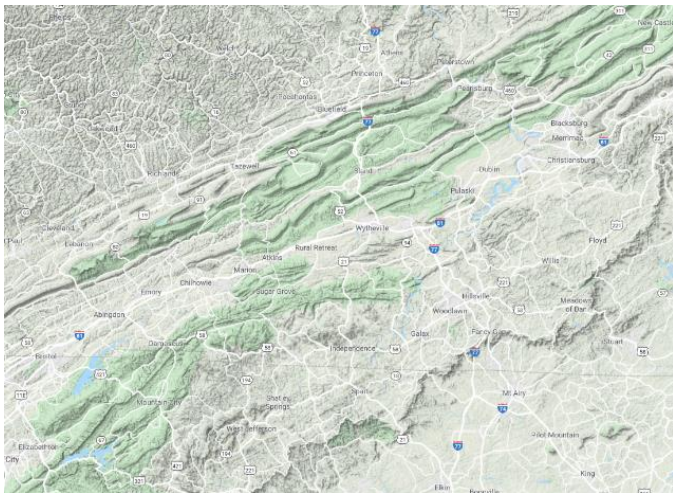
Some may be thinking, "Man, that's awfully far south for the middle of summer. I don't like riding when it's hot and humid." The base town for this ride is Wytheville, VA, pronounced "with-ville". The surprise is that the average high temperature for the middle of June in

Wytheville is 4 degrees cooler than Livonia. That's because this ride is at high elevation with Wytheville being at 2300 feet and most of the rides being between 2000 and 3000 feet elevation. At the highest point, the route climbs to 5600 feet while the lowest is about 1200 feet. The humidity's not bad either.

No one can predict the weather, but it's not like your typical image of southern heat and humidity.

Distance

I know how appealing a nearby ride can be. Not as much time on freeways, more time riding. Obviously, Wytheville is farther than Wheeling or Marietta. In fact, it's just about 20 miles farther than Middlesboro or Lewisburg or about 500 miles, depending on where you live. To make it worth the trip, I plan to be there and riding Wednesday thru Sunday, in case anyone wants more opportunity to explore the area. Of course, most riders don't have that much vacation, so the main ride will be on the weekend for those who have to get back to work. Don't worry, there are plenty of routes, currently 14 without running them in reverse.



The Good Stuff

Ok, I have given you all the bad stuff. On the other hand, the roads are excellent, traffic is low, and the country is beautiful and varied. The land varies from the ridges and valleys of the Allegheny Mountains, to the random hills and hollers of WV, to the Blue Ridge running along the edge of the Appalachian Plateau, to

the highland mountains where Virginia, N. Carolina, and Tennessee meet.



The roads are among the most entertaining and varied I have ever seen. I am often riding with a smile on my face. Roads vary from one and a half lane roads without a centerline to US highways with standard 12 feet wide lanes and the odd passing lane. The roads follow the land with S bends, sweepers, hairpins, and generally fun curvy sections. Think MR2 with slightly smaller roads on average. As a rider I know said, "From Front Royal to Hungry Mother, Virginia has some of the best motorcycle roads that I know."

Some of you have a little experience in these areas roads. The closest current ride is the Fall Color Tour and the route through Talcott and Paint Bank shares a few roads with a ride on the Forbidden Zone. And on the south end, MR2 stretches out to include the Snake and Roan Mountain, both of which are on Forbidden Zone rides. As for named roads, we are a few miles down the highway from the "Back of the Dragon" that shows up on a number of routes as a fun way to get back to the hotel.

As is my custom, most of the routes are named after small local places and this area has lots of fun names to play with. The signature route is Speedwell. It's not just a place name, it's a philosophy. Speedwell includes the Snake and some of my favorite roads that don't have marketing names. As for other interesting place names, how about Frog Level, Busthead, or Odd?

The route is based in Wytheville, Va., a convenient tow down I-77. I chose Wytheville because it is in the middle of the routes and has a selection of hotels, restaurants, etc.

The base hotel is the Days Inn in Wytheville (276-228-5500) and there is an initial block of 10 rooms at \$55 per night + tax under the name Michigan Sport. This is an older hotel, but clean and comfortable with a friendly and helpful staff. For those who want something a little nicer or feel the need for the indoor pool, the Holiday Inn Express is just across the street. There is no way to guess how many people will go to a new ride, so please send me an email when you make a reservation at the Days Inn so I can monitor the room block. It sounds like they can add rooms if we need them. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by email at jac.brown999@gmail.com. I hope I see you there.

breakfast group here in Windsor we had a group of 4 wanting to go.

First off, I had never created GPS routes, I had only used the ones provided by the MSTR on group rides. I tried my luck with Garmin Basecamp but found it clunky. I soon found software online called MyRouteApp. Did the download and found it to be super easy to use, so I tinkered with creating and testing local routes first.

When I got more confident, I started by looking at the northern Ontario region where I thought I wanted to go. I got some advice from Roy Winseck, also from Windsor, as he and Keith Danielson did a similar tour in August. Roy offered maps, his routes and advice to visit a website called Ride the Highlands.ca. This was a good site where they offer maps and route with write-ups about the best roads in the area.

Ride the Highlands: An Adventure in Northern Ontario

By Phil Bolichowski



Late this summer I had the pleasure riding in a new area in northern Ontario with Chip Ashton, Dave Evans and Charles Fider, all MSTR members. Chip and I have been talking about a ride in Canada for over a year now and decided to make it happen. Once word got out with the Saturday morning



So, I got busy creating routes to try. First thing was to find a starting spot? I decided on a city called Peterborough, which is east of Toronto and slightly north. With a starting spot and date set I started the process linking suggested roads to make loops that returned to the same hotel every night, MSTR style.

After a few weeks of tinkering I settled on 3 different routes, made maps and shared my GPX files with the group. Day one was a trip north and west of Peterborough. The northern stretch from Buckhorn on #507 was a very fun isolated road, about 30 miles long of endless sweepers and rolling hills. What a fun ride indeed! This led us to Harcourt, then back into a picturesque cottage town called

Haliberton. Postcard beautiful and a great lunch stop. The afternoon was a return trip through Minden and Norland with a stop at where else but Tim Horton's.

Day #2 started with the same road out of Buckhorn, then off to Bancroft. Another Tim Horton's was at the northern tip of the ride in another cottage town of Barry's Bay. The return route looped back into Bancroft for a lunch at McDonalds and a really neat backroad called Lower Faraday Road, then on to #46 to Havelock. Guess what, another Tim's at #46 & Highway 7, so okay we had another coffee (there is a theme here with guys over 60 I guess).

Day 3 was destined to be different. This route I knew was pushing the mileage boundaries, but we needed to try it anyway. We did a secondary highway #28 direct to Bancroft, picturesque but lame. Passing east we encountered a rock slide that closed the road, so with limited options we looped back to Bancroft and went north to Maynooth, then east to Combermere, where we found the best road ever called #517 to Boulter Road South. I have never seen a brand new blacktop carved through the bush for about 20 miles, what a hoot! We finally got back on track to #71, #65, then finally to Calibogie Road. These are straight out of southern Ohio quality and will put a smile on any rider's face.



Lunch was at a pub in this cute cottage village that has, you guessed it, a beautiful

blacktop race course for bikes and cars, carved out of the woods! We did get to enter the grounds, but didn't get a lap in. Hmmm, wonder what a track day and a 3 day backroad trip would be like?



The return trip had to be cut short due to our detours eating up 1.5 hours of our day, but the #511 south was more of what we had before lunch! Sadly we had to flat top it back to Peterborough on Highway #7 to get home before dark. It was a 615km (or 385) mile day for this geriatric crew, so we were pretty pooped.

All in all, I think the comments from the group were:

- Beautiful scenery with historic sites.
- Great "Sport Touring" ride, not a big abundance to great roads, but enough to be fun.
- Ride would be best on a GS, Multistrada or any of the full-size sport touring bikes.
- Not for the aggressive sport bike rider.
- Northern roads are rougher than the smoother roads in the south
- Great alternative for the hot summer months, instead of going south.

July 15th- 19th of 2020, we will be having a MSTR ride to this area in Canada called the Halliburton Highlands. The home base is a small cottage area town called Bancroft. There are only 2 private hotels in this town, The Sword Inn Bancroft and Bancroft Inn & Suites. Nothing fancy, just 3 stars and there are about 45 rooms at each hotel. Stay tuned.

A special thanks to **Jac Brown & Phil Bolichowski** for their articles, pictures featured this month and for their efforts in arranging two new rides for the 2020 season.

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.

MSTR EAST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, November 23rd, 2019, at 9:00 am

Saturday, December 21st, 2019, at 9:00 am

Note: the next meeting is ACTUALLY a week early due to Christmas

East breakfast meeting is at **COACH'S CORNER**, 36000 W. Seven Mile Road, Livonia, MI 48152.

MSTR WEST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, December 14th, 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 Member of the Year Banquet

The 2019 MOTY Banquet will be held on **Saturday, January 18 at Karl's Cabin** in Plymouth. Social Hour (cash bar) starts at 6:00 pm with dinner served at 7:00 pm followed by presentation of the awards for the year.

Dinner will be full service, with your choice of one of four entrées, followed by a dessert table provided by one of our dealer members. When dinner is complete, we'll be presenting the awards for the season just completed, culminating with the MOTY award. There will be door prizes throughout the evening. There will be room for 100 attendees in the banquet hall. Overflow can be accommodated in the regular dining room, but you can join the festivities in the banquet hall during the meet and greet as well as during the awards. Make your reservation soon so you can be seated with all of your friends.

Please reserve your place soon, see a few pages below for your reservation form. Please RSVP with full payment by December 15. You can mail your reservation to the address shown on the form, or you can bring your completed reservation form and payment to any of the remaining meetings this year. We'll also have a limited number of forms at each of the breakfast meetings. We hope to see you there on January 18.



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For more information on this year's 2020 IMS shows and ticket prices see <https://motorcycleshows.com/>.

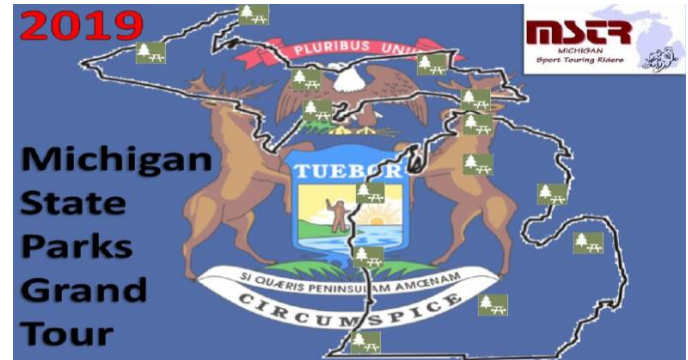
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wwebb@cyclessafety.training**



**MSTR
2019 Rides**

Unfortunately most 2019 rides are done for the year. Please check the MSTR website for the list of the rides and events for rest of the year and information for upcoming 2020 rides. (www.mstriders.com)



This year Keith Danielson's Grand Tour has hopefully taken you on some Michigan journeys to see some of our state parks throughout the spring, summer and into this fall. The riding season is unfortunately almost over so get out there and get your last checkpoints in before it is too late. You must have your pictures in to Keith as soon as possible. Please see MSTRiders.com under events for more information.

**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

MSTR Dealer Members & News

BMW Motorcycles of SE Michigan
www.bmwmcsem.com/

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www.ducatidetroit.com/

College Bike Shop
www.collegebikeshop.com/

Honda Suzuki of Warren
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BMW Detroit
www.bmwdetroit.com

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.



MICHIGAN SPORT TOURING RIDERS AWARDS BANQUET

RESERVATION FORM



Date: **Saturday, January 18, 2020**
 Time: **6 - 7 PM - Cash Bar / Meet and Greet**
7 PM - Dinner Service
8:15 PM - Awards Presentation

Location: **Karls Cabin Restaurant**
6005 Gotfredson Road
Plymouth, MI 48170

DINNER MENU

Each entrée includes vegetable, potato, tossed salad w/ choice of two dressings, bread and butter, coffee and /or tea
 Tax and Tip are included in the pricing shown

	# Req'd	Each	=	Subtotal
A Filet Mignon <i>8oz center cut, cooked medium, zip butter</i>	_____ X	\$36.00	=	_____
B Salmon Chardonnay <i>7oz salmon, topped w/white wine, lemon & caper beurre blanc</i>	_____ X	\$24.00	=	_____
C Pork Chops <i>Twin 6oz boneless pork chops marinated in olive oil, minced garlic & spices</i>	_____ X	\$21.00	=	_____
C Chicken Picatta <i>6oz breaded natural chicken breast, piccata w/artichokes, capers, lemon</i>	_____ X	\$21.00	=	_____
TOTAL				_____

DINNER CHOICE

(Circle one letter per name - see choices below)

FIRST and LAST NAME

	Filet	Salmon	Pork Chops	Chicken
	A	B	C	D
_____	A	B	C	D
_____	A	B	C	D
_____	A	B	C	D
_____	A	B	C	D

The MSTR will provide a \$10 cash discount, payed at the banquet, for every MSTRider who attends the banquet and purchases one entrée

Due to limited seating, dinner service is limited to the first 100 submitted reservations. If we exceed 100 these attendees will be notified, their payment refunded and are welcome to join us at the Cash Bar/Meet & Greet plus the Awards Presentation and will be seated in the main restaurant area during the dinner service.

RESERVATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO DECEMBER 31ST, 2019

Please send your reservation form with payment to:

Ian Orr
 420 Summit Boulevard
 Lake Orion, MI 48362

If paying by check - make the check out to Ian Orr




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

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