



Michigan Sport Touring Report

April 2020

Editor – Rachel Durling

Pre-Covid19 Ride

By: Bob Komjathy

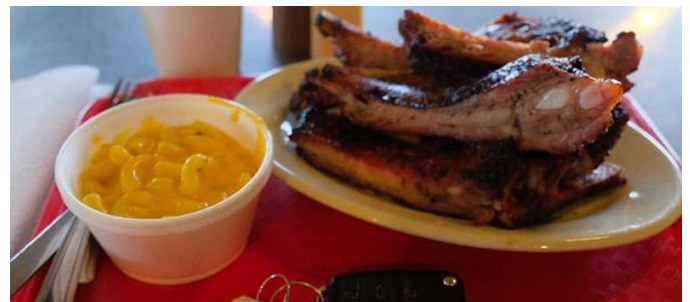
I got an early start to the 2020 motorcycle season with a ride out West. I thought I would pass along some photos and the story to give you guys something to think about besides quarantines and pandemics. Too much snow in middle February so I trailered out to Tucson, Arizona. The plan was to do some local riding with a friend of mine who had relocated to Arizona from Detroit. It also included an excursion into California to ride the PCH (Pacific Coastal Highway) from Ventura up to near San Francisco, working my way back through the Central Valley to Sequoia N.P., Joshua Tree N.P., and then heading back to Tucson.



The week before leaving Michigan was split between overhauling an aircraft panel, radios, GPS, com antennas, and getting the bike

ready for the season. Fresh Road Pilot tires, all fluids changed, driveshaft spline lube, and a rebuild of the final drive (crown bearing, shaft seal, and crown seal). 71K on the bike before setting off and the bearing owed me nothing. The shaft seal was leaking too so if I was going to replace that, I might as well do a thorough job. All this was completed with a day to spare, packed and left for parts unknown just after the February East side meeting in Livonia.

The route was through Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas to get down as quickly as I could to decent weather.... wet weather from Effingham, Illinois to the Texas state line. After that, I only had a half a day of rain for the rest of my travels.



I stopped at a few bar-b-cue joints on the way to sample different methods of smoking and seasonings. Missouri and Arkansas were great but the Texas dry rub at Crazy Larry's in Amarillo was definitely worth the price of admission. There was more food than I could think of eating for lunch so half of this got wrapped up in a to-go box for dinner.

I made it into New Mexico by evening. Tucumcari, New Mexico was going to be my

resting spot for the night. Cutting across to southwestern New Mexico, the next stop was at Carlsbad Caverns N.P. I called it quits for the day at Whites City just 6 miles from the caverns. The night sky had the smallest sliver after a new moon as I could remember in recent years with decent lighting.

Half of the next day was going to be spent in the national park. I arrived at the National Park visitor's center before it opened and just smiled at the rising sun and 100 mile visibility. I wanted to do some photography in the caverns without a lot of people randomly wandering into my shot looking like they were taken at Wal-Mart instead.



If you have never been there it is worth the trip. The caverns are located almost 850 feet below the visitor center. The main cavern runs for more than ½ mile. The caverns are well lit and even a cell phone camera could take some decent shots.



I reached Tucson, AZ the evening of the 24th of February. Got a hotel for the night and met up with Patrick Highland my friend in Red Rock, AZ the next morning. The bike got un-trailered, washed, and waxed ready for riding. The trailer was tucked away in his garage. We spent the day taking it easy and the afternoon headed out to the Saguaro National Park which was nearby. First real test of the bike since the repairs, it was a small 100 mile jaunt for the day. Might as well make sure all is well before venturing too far away. All was performing as it should.



The next three nights were the only camping days on the trip. Picacho Peak State Park was nearby and another Saguaro sanctuary. Far enough from the big city lights, I got a chance to do a little night photography. About midnight and again near 5 a.m. to watch the Milky Way start to appear in the northern hemisphere before the dawn approached. The first night was the best for this with more high clouds for the next two nights....which was okay because it lended itself to some really gorgeous sunrises and sunsets.



Patrick and I visited Tombstone and also Mount Lemon where they were still getting

snow. Thursday the 27th was time to start my road trip to California.



The goal was to enjoy the ride and scenery up the PCH, Los Padres National Forest, and Big Sur. Also to visit the remnants of the army base I had my basic training almost 50 years ago. (I know... I am getting old!) The colors and early spring blooms covered the hills along Highway 1. Nice curves, small coastal towns and breath-taking scenery. Hard to take it all in and watch the road at the same time but somehow I managed. Got a hotel in Monterey, California next to the old Fort Ord Army Base... or what was left of it.



At my hotel, all the young people staffing the desk were surprised to learn the hotel was built in what was once the M16 qualifying range along the coastal dunes that were the backdrop to the targets down range. I remember this military base as being rather

cold due to the fog that rolled in around 3 p.m. and remained until 12 noon each day. In fact, it was the only army base in the lower US that dress green uniforms were worn year round. I stopped by where my barracks used to be to find only an open field now next to the Monterey Police station (use to be the quartermasters building). I remember the high power lines and poles outside my barracks because the fog was so thick, that sparks would jump the line insulators all night long. Windows were always open too... to prevent the Fort Ord Cough... a local form of meningitis.

I rode the PCH not quite up to San Francisco to Half Moon Bay before heading east to ride the Central Valley. It's amazing how many crops are grown there with the aid of dams and reservoirs holding the key to turning desert into farmlands. For over 200 miles, I would be in constant fragrance of fruit tree blossoms. I had not seen that many apple, pear, cherry, almond, and pistachio trees in bloom all at the same time. They bring in apiaries from all over the country to help pollinate all these trees. Every 10 rows of trees were 6 to 8 boxes of bee hives.



At Fresno, California CA it was 180 miles east to Sequoia National Park. After 50 miles, the land turns to citrus trees again as far as the eye can see up to the edge of the Sierra National Forest foothills. The park entrance had just taken down the signs requiring chains due to earlier in the day snowfall. I was allowed in on a motorcycle and followed the switchbacks up to 8,400 feet (check out Ca198). That was going to be as high as I would get before turning around. It was

wonderful but they had used sand on the roads for extra traction...works for cars, not so much for my mode of travel. It was still very much worth the ride and at this time of year there were few cars on the road. Late in the day, I stopped in Exeter, California. It's a small agricultural city in the middle of the citrus belt.



The next day destination Joshua Tree via Mojave, Apple Valley, and Johnson Valley. This route parallels the Los Angeles metro area, low traffic, and gorgeous scenery along the San Bernardino Mountains. It's hard to judge distances when your line of sight is 65+ miles. I spent 2/3rds of the day getting to the National Park. I was expecting Joshua trees but not a Joshua forest. Very pretty country. I got off the bike and did a couple of 3 mile hikes along the trails. Sun was getting low so it was a brisk ride through a nearly empty park enjoying the curves on Park Blvd all the way to 29 Palms, my next stopping point for the day.



California 62 to Vidal Junction US 95 south paralleling the Colorado River to Blythe, CA for lunch. Continuing south on US95 to Interstate-8 for a quick slab ride to Gila Bend, AZ. Picking up AZ 85 south to AZ 86 through the southern desert back into Tucson. 5 days 2,200 miles,

lots of bug hits, loads of fun. Thankful I got a chance to ride... a good long ride.



The trip continued on the return home. The photo below is of the flowering Dogwoods from Arkansas north of Fort Smith. If you would like to see the other photos, here is a link: [Bob's Arkansas Flowering Dogwood Pictures](#).

I am wondering when the Michigan riding season can safely get under way. Until then, stay safe my friends.



Taking Back Control

By: Ken Snodgrass

Most all of us have a short checklist we go through before the kickstands up moment of a group ride – we may check our mirrors, engine and fuel gages, our gloves and helmet, and shake out our pants and coat. I'd like to suggest you add another item to your list: 10 seconds to calm your mind and allow your cognitive thoughts to regain some control over your emotional reactions to your excited state.

We all know that rush of emotion and anticipation before the start of a group ride – the sound of the starter and then the exhaust

note as the engine fires up, the vibration of the handle bars, bikes lining up behind the point rider as stress hormones flow into our body making us race ready and itching to roll. Now usually emotion is a good thing since it works powerfully and quickly to motivate behavior in response to the environment or images produced by our memories. In most situations our emotional response saves us since it would just take too long for the cognitive mind to analyze a situation and develop appropriate actions. Sometimes however, unchecked emotions may lead to behaviors that increase the risk of a bad outcome, especially when an emotion becomes attached to a pleasurable or exhilarating feeling. And we all know that there is nothing quite as exhilarating as carving that perfect corner. One way to reduce this risk is to turn down the emotional response to riding and turn up the cognitive control of our actions.

A method to accomplish this reset is the application of mindfulness, which involves being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment. It is easy to find instructions in the practice of mindfulness and one of the simplest ways is to learn is to attend a yoga class. Like any other skill, mindfulness takes practice and we have all sorts of opportunities to do this – before bedtime, while you're waiting in the dentist's office, or whenever you have a quiet moment by yourself. I've developed my own pre-ride mindfulness routine and with a little effort you can develop yours too. Applying mindfulness before a ride takes maybe 10 seconds and will result in enhanced calmness and awareness and put you more in control of your emotions and the situation.

<https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/>

A special thanks to Bob Komjathy and Ken Snodgrass for the 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 **2020 MOTY Award!**



MSTR Heads Up

Here is a listing of some of the upcoming local events and meetings within the next few months. If you know of a local motorcycle

event in Michigan or Ontario the MSTR would be interested in send Rachel Durling an e-mail to

Communications@mstriders.com with the details.

MSTR East & West Breakfast Meeting using Zoom

Saturday, April 25 at 11:00am

At last Saturday's MSTR Zoom meeting we had over 50 people who joined. We received several requests from participants that we do it again. Since the weather for Saturday doesn't look all that good, and most of us don't have anything else to do, we will be holding another online meeting using Zoom this Saturday. You can use either your computer or your smartphone with webcam and microphone, or if you don't have either, you can use your phone for audio only. For those not familiar with Zoom, it allows you to see everyone you are talking with on your computer screen and hear what people are saying. This can be quite a mish-mash of noise if everyone is talking at the same time, so we have established some guidelines for how the meeting will be conducted

Check your email for the invitation and instructions on how to join this meeting online. Hope to see you online Saturday!

MSTR
EAST Breakfast Meetings

**April 25th meeting will be a
Zoom Meeting**

Hopefully the next West Side meeting at the restaurant will be

**Saturday, May 23rd, 2020 at 9:00 am at
Coach's Corner**

36000 W. Seven Mile Road, Livonia, MI
48152.

MSTR
WEST Breakfast Meetings

**May 9th meeting will be a Zoom
Meeting**

Hopefully the next West Side meeting at the restaurant will be

**Saturday, June 13th, 2020 at 9:00 AM at
Alibi Bar & Grill**

1394 E. Riverside Drive, Ionia, MI 48846.
(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.

**Leamington Flat Track
Race & Wine Tasting**

July 11th, 2020
Leamington, Ontario
Canada

Canceled due to Covid19.

**Free
Twisty
Road
Riding
Seminar**

**Interested? Or if you
are an experienced
rider who wants to
help with a seminar,
send an email to
wwweb@cyclesafety.training**



**MSTR
2020 Rides**

Please check the MSTR website for an updated list of the rides and events for rest of the year. Some dates have been adjusted for the events have already been set and sadly some had to be canceled due to Covid19. A complete list of events is on the Events page of the MSTR website (www.mstriders.com).

1/2 K Ride

**Tentatively scheduled for Saturday, May
30th, 2020 at 8:30 am.**

Meet at Meijer at 8650 W. Grand River Ave,
Brighton, MI 48116 at 8:30 am. There is gas
there and a very large parking lot.

The ride will go up through the center of the state and back down with a lunch stop in Midland MI at a Mexican food restaurant [Rancheritos Mexican Food Website](#) that has plenty of outdoor seating to maintain social distancing with nearby parks. There are also other restaurants close by that offer take out if you do not want Mexican food, like Good-to-Go [Good to go Takeout Website](#) that will pack you a lunch and bring it to the Mexican restaurant or to the nearby park. The total ride will be about 420 miles.

Please email Bob to get on the signup sheet if you are interested in this ride.

Ride Organizer: Bob Komjathy
rx_mich@yahoo.com

4th Annual

Ladies of the MSTR Ride

Tentatively scheduled for Sunday, May 31st, 2020 at 10:00 am.

What Is International Female Ride Day? International Female Ride Day© (IFRD) the first Saturday in May, is a global day celebrating the cultural, social and active lifestyles of women who ride and enjoy motorcycling.

motoress.com/about-international-female-ride-day

We are hoping that we will be able to have the 4th Annual Ladies of the MSTR ride on Saturday May 31st this year depending on state regulations due to Covid19. We plan to meet at **Mugg and Bopps Gas Station in Gregory; 106 M-36, Gregory, MI 48137 at 10:00am.** Come with a full belly or bring snacks, we will not be stopping for a group meal this year.

Male MSTR riders are also welcome to join. We will split into groups in Gregory and the

ladies' will all be in one group and the guys can go on a ride as well. Some may agree to meet back at the courthouse in Stockbridge after we ride so they can meet back up with their significant others to ride home. Please email MJ Allmond if you would like to be put on the signup sheet.

Ride Organizer: MJ Allmond
vtxchick@hotmail.com

mr2

Michigan Renegade Mountain Ride
May 11–15, 2020
Waynesville, NC

MR2 has been **canceled** due to Covid19.

TFZ

The Forbidden Zone
June 18-21, 2020
Wytheville, VA

TMZ has been **canceled** due to Covid19.

RTH

Ride the Highlands
July 16-19th, 2020
Canada

RTH has been **canceled** due to Covid19.

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.

2019 MSTR Smug Mug Pictures:






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