



## Michigan Sport Touring Report

July 2022

Editor – Rachel Durling

### Training Day

By: Kent Niederhofer

As the name implies, the bulk of the MSTR's membership engages in sport riding and the motorcycles we own possess that capability to varying levels – in some cases to the extreme because they are just slightly short of full-on racing bikes. But there is a sub-segment of our membership that also enjoy playing where the pavement ends (as referenced in our club's Slack channel). I, and a few others, belong to that group of deviants and quite recently three of us attended a BMW Performance Centre two-day off-road adventure motorcycle training course held at Smart Adventures facility in Barrie, ON, Canada.

Our host was owner and chief instructor, Clinton Smout, who is an experienced and highly pedigreed on- and off-road rider who has been providing instruction for over 20 years and has taught over 112,000 students during that time. Clinton is a story-teller who has a friendly, engaging personality and is deeply passionate about sharing his love for motorcycling with others. He has an uncanny ability to assess his students' "state of mind" and tailoring the nature and pace of the lessons to fit the audience. He provides students with encouragement and praise for both effort and each small advance in skill and ability. Likewise, his instructors are very capable riders themselves and demonstrate these same qualities.



Fig. 1: Our Fearless Leader: Owner and Chief Instructor, Clinton Smout

The day began with riders split up into groups depending on their skill level and the type of training they were interested in. Some were first-time riders that consisted of young girls and boys who rode small to mid-size dirt bikes while others looked to develop their off-road, adventure motorcycle riding skills. Greg Linton, Ken Snodgrass, and I were three of five riders who in this group and, as it turned out, Clinton was our primary instructor. Assisting him was Louise who had been providing instruction for over nine years and was a very capable rider

herself, her husband even qualifying for the Canadian GS Trophy team.

To administer the BMW Motorrad off-road adventure riding curriculum, the instructors at Smart Adventures are trained by the Germans to provide the same 21 lessons that are offered by BMW Motorrad in Germany and at their Spartanburg, SC training center. The Canadian facility, which is located just north of Barrie, ON, Canada adjacent to the Horseshoe Valley Resort & Spa, is a roughly 100-acre park with sandy open areas, dirt and grass covered hills, rutted and log-littered fields, wooded trails, and gravel parking lots that provide riders with a wide variety of non-paved surfaces to hone their off-road riding skills.



Fig. 2: The Smart Adventures Facilities in Barrie, ON, Canada

The day began with the usual administrative paper shuffle including the signing of waivers which was over with quickly. Next was the fitting of safety gear and equipment. Smart Adventures has a fitting room complete with helmets, boots, chest protectors, jerseys, and gloves of all styles, colors, and sizes so participants who don't have or didn't bring their gear are assured to be protected from what they're about to encounter. After we donned our gear, we left the fitting room and headed outside to tables and benches that were under a large tent for orientation. Clinton provided some background on the organization's start and what's been accomplished over its' 20 years of existence. He then discussed what types of exercises we'd engage in for this Level I two-day course. That was followed by a brief overview

of the motorcycles' controls; available to off-road adventure riding participants were BMW F750GS's and BMW F850GS's – one of the latter which featured a lowered suspension. And while BMW R1200/1250GS's are usually included in this fleet, the supply and demand curve saw to it that none were available in this year.

We then mounted our steeds and rode off led by Clinton who took us through some warm-up exercises that included clockwise and counterclockwise circles in relatively shallow sand followed by some figure eights and then couple of loops through the parking area. After that we headed out to a combination of light sand and dirt trails through lightly and heavily wooded areas with Louise bringing up the rear and monitoring our progress.



Fig. 3 & 4: Hill Climb & Descent and Riding Between the Pipes

The sweltering heat – over 90F on the first day and just a few degrees cooler on the second – ensured that returns to the tent for frequent water and rest breaks were integrated into the day. These were usually accompanied by at least one of Clinton's countless motorcycle stories – which were fascinating and sometimes rather tragic as they recounted stories of bad decisions that often led to injuries, or in one case, a fatality. Despite Clinton's light-hearted and easy-going personality, he used these stories as stark reminders to enjoy this sport but take the preparation to do it seriously.

Over the course of the weekend, we engaged in increasingly more challenging trail rides including serpentine single-track laced with dirt, branches and stumps, ruts, and fist-sized rocks that were free to roll in any direction they pleased. In particular, this last obstacle led to

one of my worst of four drops over the weekend. Thankfully, riding rental bikes ensured that we weren't causing unnecessary damage to our own two-wheeled transportation though there were those that did so.



Fig. 5: Practicing Rear Brake Skids & Turns

Other exercises focused on proper sightlines, light touch of the grips, body position and balance, and weighting of the pegs to facilitate steering. These included ~60% grade hill climbs where we learned how to regain control of a stalled bike, practicing rear brake skids and turns on a gravel strewn parking lot to shorten stopping distances, traversing a teeter totter ramp and riding between narrowly placed pipes to keep our head and eyes up, and using body position and throttle to help the bike's skid plate clear logs.

Of course, much of the riding relied on combining more than one of these newly taught skills and that's where things got more interesting. As Clinton suggested, the continued practicing of these lessons will help build muscle memory and improve our off-road riding skills, making a return for Level II training far more productive. It's worth mentioning that, while the curriculum is obviously geared toward off-road riding, it also provides many valuable benefits to the on-road rider, including fine clutch, throttle and brake control, balance on the bike, increased confidence in low grip situations, emphasis on looking ahead versus at what's directly in front of you, and picking the best line given the road (or surface) conditions.

Overall, I believe our MSTR trio would agree that the weekend was a complete success. There were no injuries, we learned new off-road riding skills, and we had a great time. And isn't that what motorcycling and the MSTR is all about?



Fig. 6: Graduation Day for the Weary Warriors

If you're interested in signing up for one of their classes or simply understanding what services the good folks at Smart Adventures offer, just check out their website at: [www.smartadventures.ca](http://www.smartadventures.ca) and [www.bmwhorseshoe.com](http://www.bmwhorseshoe.com).

**A special thanks to Kent Niederhofer for his article 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 **2022 MOTY Awards!**



## 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](mailto:Communications@mstriders.com) with the details.

**MSTR**  
**East Breakfast Meetings**

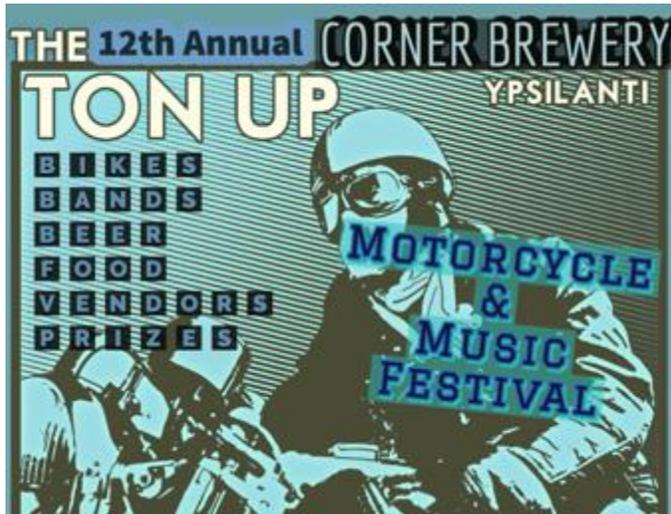
Our next east side breakfast meeting will be at on Saturday August 27, 2022 at a NEW LOCATION at George's Senate Coney Island, 39430 Dun Rovin Dr, Northville, MI 48168 at 9:00am.

Please, park the farthest away from the front door unless you have mobility issues.

**MSTR**  
**West Breakfast Meetings**

Our next west side breakfast meeting will be on Saturday August 13, 2022, at the Alibi Bar & Grill, 1394 East Riverside Dr, Ionia, MI 48846 NEW TIME at 11:00am.

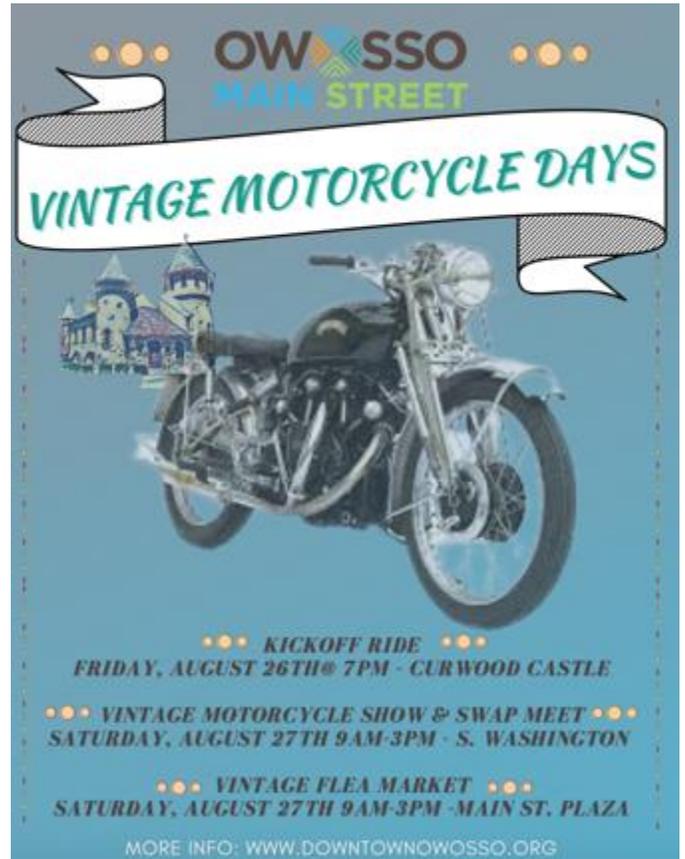
Please email Gala at [gschip@me.com](mailto:gschip@me.com) to let her know that you will be there for breakfast, so that she can plan to have enough food for everyone.



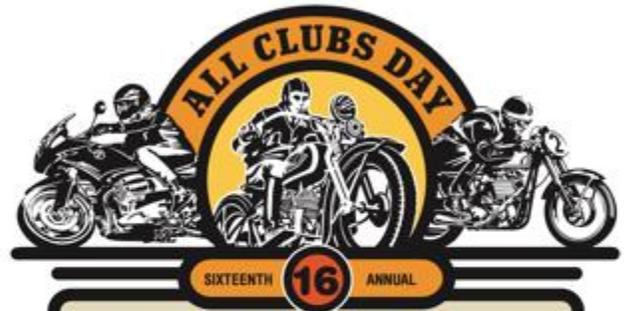
The 12th Annual Ton-Up Motorcycle and Music Festival is set for Sunday, August 14 at Corner Brewery in Depot Town, Ypsilanti at 720 Norris St. Ypsilanti, MI 48198.

**39<sup>th</sup> Annual**  
**Battle of the Brits**  
**Motorcycle & Car Show and**  
**Swap Meet**

**Sunday, September 11, 2022**  
 from 10:00am-5:00pm at Camp Dearborn  
 1700 General Motors Rd., Milford, MI 48380  
[www.metrotriumphriders.com](http://www.metrotriumphriders.com)



**Sunday September 18th, 2022**  
 12 Noon to 4pm  
**The Village of Stockbridge**  
 "A Great Place To Ride To"  
 Nestled in the corner of Ingham, Livingston, Jackson & Washtenaw Counties

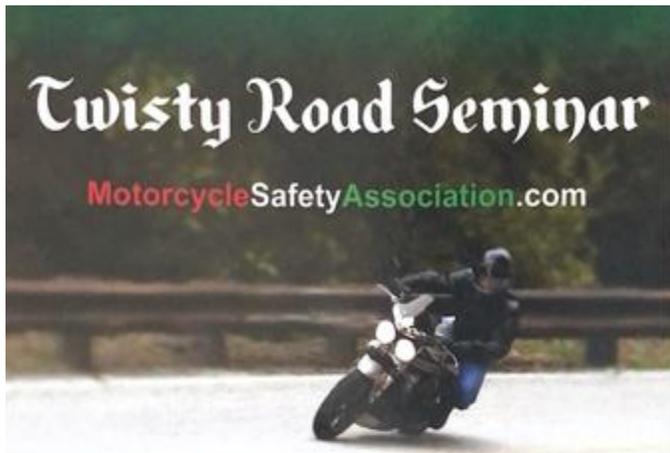


Come and enjoy a day of Vintage, Classic and Remarkable Motorcycles displayed around The Village Green by clubs & individuals invited to show their best. Clubs are invited to showcase club activities & member motorcycles. Individuals with unique, rare or historic Motorcycles are invited to contact Suzi (Participation in the show by invitation only)

**SPECTATORS WELCOME!**  
 Breakfast 8 - 12 at the Presbyterian Church  
 Food Trucks Lunch behind the Town Hall  
 12 Noon to 3 pm

For more information contact Suzi: 517-851-7437

Sponsored by Stockbridge Downtown Development Authority



# Twisty Road Seminar

MotorcycleSafetyAssociation.com

*What a Professional rider says about the Seminar*

"The Twisty Road Seminar offers sound advice to all street riders, regardless of experience level"  
Mark Miller, Isle of Man TT – 1st Place Winner

## About us

The Motorcycle Safety Association is a State of Michigan Non-Profit corporation. The U.S. Treasury Department has determined the Association is a charity under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are therefore tax deductible to the extent the law allows.



info@MotorcycleSafetyAssociation.com



## MSTR 2022 Rides

Please check the MSTR website on the events page for a list of the rides and events for 2022 ([www.mstriders.com](http://www.mstriders.com)). If you are interested in volunteering, please send an email to the address above. Note: MSTRider membership is required to attend an MSTR riding event. We will not be able to add your name to an event sign-up list unless you are a current MSTRider or until your New MSTRider Form or MSTRider Renewal form and fee are received. Go to [www.mstriders.com](http://www.mstriders.com), then navigate to the Resources page and scroll down to the [New MSTRider Form](#) or the [MSTRider Renewal Form](#).

# BBR 7

**Barn Burn Raid 7**

**August 14 to August 20 (long version)**

**August 18 to August 20 (standard version)**

**Marietta, OH**

The Barn Burn Raid (BBR) is one of our most popular and best attended events. It takes its name from the iconic Mail Pouch Tobacco barns seen throughout rural Ohio.



We'll be riding along some of the best twisty roads in and around the rolling hills and valleys of southeast Ohio and West Virginia. We'll visit favorite sites like the Big Muskie in Ohio and the New River Gorge Bridge and Holly River State Park in West Virginia. And of course, every route includes a great lunch stop such as the Beallsville Diner, Boondocks BBQ, Hillbilly Hotdogs, Maxwell's Pizza and Pies & Pints.

BBR is headquartered in Marietta, Ohio making it a comfortable one-day ride from many Michigan locations. BBR 7 officially runs from Sunday, August 14th to Saturday, August 20th. MSTRiders can choose to attend for the entire week or for any portion of the week, whichever fits their schedule.

**BBR Event Headquarters  
Microtel Inn  
506 Pike Street, Marietta, OH**

An event package, consisting of an event overview, GPS routes, turn-by-turn directions and route maps will be made available to everyone who signed up.

**Event Organizer: Ian Orr**

**Email: [mclorr1198@gmail.com](mailto:mclorr1198@gmail.com)**

## **TOTM** **Tip Of the Mitt 14**

**September 15 to September 18**

**Bellaire, Michigan**

September will be here before you know it and Bellaire MI is a great place to go riding and spend time with friends. Come and ride Alden Highway, M88 to Old Dixie and then on to Charlevoix. Take the scenic tour of the Leelanau Peninsula. How about that M-119 "Tunnel of Trees" loop? Enjoy an outside garden lunch at the Legs Inn. Take a short, \$3 cable ferry ride across Lake Charlevoix in Ironton. Come on, you can do it: Ride across the Mackinaw Straits over that big beautiful bridge. Choices, choices, choices!

The good news is that we have managed a place to lay our head, revel in the day's events, and get out and about in and around Bellaire MI.

**Legend Cottage Inn at Shanty Creek 5670 Shanty Creek Rd, Bellaire, MI 49615 Phone: 231 533-3162**

If you are not familiar with Shanty Creek Resort there are nearby coffee and dining venues within an easy walk from the Legend Cottage Inn: The Pelican's Nest, Sarducci's Creekside, The Lakeview Restaurant and The Shanty Bar and Grill.

From the Lakeview Hotel, which very close to the Legend Cottage Inn, we can take the available shuttle to get us into Bellaire proper (although not all at once). Once in town you can enjoy the Corner Bistro, Mammoth Distillery, Be Well Meadery, The Bellaire Bar, Toonies, M88 Coffee, Short's Brewery and the Lunch Box.

There will be mandatory riders meetings on Thursday and Friday night held in the parking lot of the Legend Cottage Inn to discuss point riders, riding groups and GPS routes. GPS Routes will be available around the beginning to September to everyone who has signed up.

**If you want to participate - here's what you do:**

Call Vonda Manga at 231 533-3162 (don't book online) and let her know you are an MSTR member. All rooms are \$302.74 for all three nights. Microwaves and Refrigerators are in each.

Let Pete know you are going to participate by sending him an e-mail with your name, cell number, email address, riding or trailering, staying at the Inn or staying elsewhere

**Ride Coordinator: Pete Stephan**

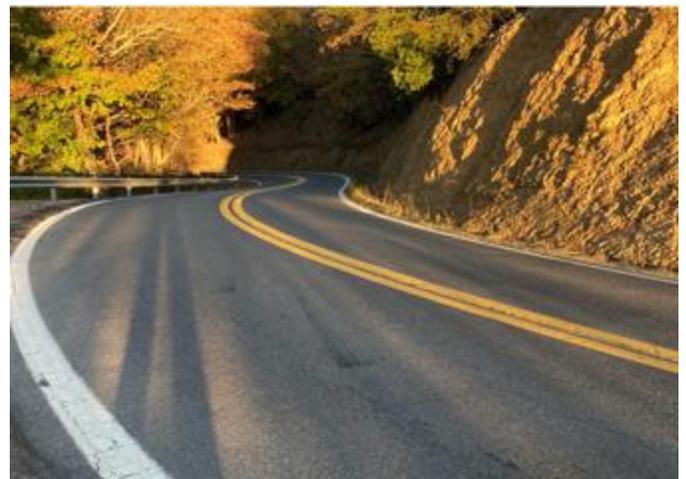
**email: [rideamotorcycle@gmail.com](mailto:rideamotorcycle@gmail.com)**

## **ROTE**

### **Riding on the Edge**

**September 25 to September 30**

**West Jefferson, NC**



Not *that* kind of riding on the edge. Save that for the track. In this case, the edge is the 2000-foot Blue Ridge Plateau.

The idea is to extend the Fall Color Ride. The Fall Color Ride is the last ride of the year. Almost time to put your bike up for the winter.

## Fall Color Ride '22

September 29 to October 2

Marietta, OH to Lewisburg, WV

Wouldn't you like to get some extra riding in during the week before the Fall Color Ride? Riders can travel down to the Edge as early as Sunday, September 25 check-in. You can ride Monday through Thursday, then ride up to Lewisburg on Friday and meet up with the fall color ride. Or any combination of days that works for you.

The Edge ride is based in West Jefferson, NC and rides the mountains on top of the plateau, the slopes of the plateau, and the valleys below. There are some roads you know. The Snake is 35 miles from the hotel and appears on several routes. The routes also include Roan Mountain, 226A up to Little Switzerland, and other roads you may recognize.

There are also lots of new roads to explore. Blowing Rock Highway, various sections of 194, and Highland Parkway to start, plus fun local roads. I smile every time I ride Buckwheat-Vannoy Road or Summit-Fall Creek Road.

Some members are unwilling to ride very much in Virginia due to its aggressive speed laws. That's totally understandable and West Jefferson is just 18 miles south of the Virginia border. I guess you could say that we are riding on the edge of the Forbidden Zone (Virginia), as well as the plateau. That said, there are currently nine routes primarily in North Carolina and a little bit of Tennessee. For those open to riding in the Forbidden Zone, there are two northern routes, one up to the "Back of the Dragon" and the other goes to some of my favorite forbidden roads. Come to think of it, I may put some of those on the ride up to Lewisburg.

West Jefferson is a nice little town with cute shops and a dozen or more restaurants to choose from. There is a waffle and coffee shop a half mile from the hotel for Don. Similar to Waynesville, most of the restaurants are a short ride from the hotel, but there are lots of good choices.

**Ride Coordinator: Jac Brown**  
**Email: [jac.brown999@gmail.com](mailto:jac.brown999@gmail.com)**

This year our Fall Color Ride returns at the end of September to the beginning of October. This is somewhat of a traveling event, as we will begin in Marietta, OH on Thursday evening, September 29 with dinner and a rider's meeting. On Friday we'll split up into groups, and head south into West Virginia following some of our usual assortment of twisty bits of tarmac, and maybe some slightly different ones too, arriving in Lewisburg on Friday afternoon.



Once there, you can remove some of the baggage from your motorcycle, because Saturday we'll enjoy some of the twisty treats that West Virginia and Virginia have to offer and return to the same place at the end of the day.

On Sunday, October 2, we'll ride a more direct route, though still with a good amount of interesting roads for the return to Marietta and back home. Most people will load the bikes back into the trailers after arrival in Marietta on Sunday and arrive back home on Sunday evening.

To sign up, you can send an email to [keithmdanielson@gmail.com](mailto:keithmdanielson@gmail.com), or sign up at an upcoming meeting.

We'll be there along with the MSTA FCR. If you want to get the MSTA routes, you can register by emailing Chris Shoop at [shoopce@gmail.com](mailto:shoopce@gmail.com) or by going to [planetreg.com](http://planetreg.com) to register online. There is no cost to register with the MSTA, though they will take donations. All fees in excess of the minimal event costs will go to Ride for Kids. You don't need to be an MSTA member.

Our Marietta accommodations will be at the Microtel Inn & Suites. They have a large parking area behind the hotel where we can leave trailers and tow vehicles. There is no block of rooms, so if you want to go, just call the Microtel directly at (740) 373-7373 to reserve your room. Use your AAA, AARP or other discount for their best rate.

In Lewisburg, call the Quality Inn & Suites directly at (304) 645-7722. When you register with Keith he'll send you information for the group rate at the Quality Inn.

See also the information sheet for the MSTR Riding on the Edge event if you want to extend the good vibes by riding in North Carolina/Tennessee/Virginia before going to Lewisburg.

**Ride Coordinator: Keith Danielson**  
Email: [keithmdanielson@gmail.com](mailto:keithmdanielson@gmail.com)

## MSTR Newsletter & Website

The MSTR Newsletter and Website ([www.mstriders.com/](http://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](mailto: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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