Michigan Sport Touring Riders

October 2026 Newsletter

Editor - Peter Stephan

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Switzerland "Big 3"

Joseph Arozarena

One of my goals was to do some riding in the mountains of Europe, although I didn't have any particular place in mind. Ian Orr told me about a motorcycling vacation he did in Italy and it got me thinking that I needed to experience that type of riding, both for the joy of the riding and the beauty of the scenery. An opportunity presented itself this year when my wife and I decided to take a long vacation in Switzerland.



Our vacation plan had two very different portions to it. The first portion, and the primary driver for choosing to go to Switzerland, was to do a 7-day mountain hike known as the Tour du Mont Blanc, with Mont Blanc being one of the very prominent snow-capped mountains in the Alps.

Club Meetings & Events

Eastside Meeting
Saturday, October 24, 9 AM
Senate Coney Island
34359 Plymouth Rd. Livonia

Westside Just for Fun
Saturday, November 14, 11 AM
Alibi Bar & Grill
1394 E. Riverside Dr. Ionia

2026 Membership Forms

2026 MSTR New Membership Form

New members may join for $25. The form includes the release form for new members to join in 2026 rides.

Learn more about MSTR HERE: https://mstriders.com



The second portion of the trip plan was to rent a car and hit a lot of the major cities and points of interest throughout the country. We would go north from Geneva to Lucern, to Zurich, down into the Bernese Oberland and then make our way east and south, eventually getting to Saint Moritz before turning west to see the Matterhorn. As I looked at our route on the way to Saint Moritz, I discovered a tremendous riding opportunity, known as Switzerland's "Big 3" mountain passes. And as luck or fate would have it, I also found a motorcycle rental company very close to where we would be staying near the city of Andermatt. Without any hesitation, I booked a one-day rental, which I expected would become one of the best experiences of the entire vacation.



We rented a 750cc Honda TransAlp and had a route identified for going through the Susten, Farka, and Grimsel mountain passes. To be honest, I wasn't quite sure what I was getting myself into; I'd never ridden a tight, twisty mountain pass road on a motorcycle before, but I was willing to take on the challenge.

As it turned out, it was less of a riding challenge and more of a test of nerves as we discovered how ridiculously narrow some of the roads were, how easy it is to plunge to your death, and how few guards were on the side of the roads.



On top of that, the roads are surprisingly busy with people in luxury cars, motorcycles, and even bicycles who were out to enjoy the roads and scenery just as we were. The number of Lamborghinis, Ferraris, Porsches and other sports cars was ridiculous, as was the number of people riding bicycles up these tremendously steep and long mountain roads. And, if that wasn't enough, we had an encounter with a small herd of sheep on the road. Needless to say, it was not a quiet ride through the countryside; it was more like a driver's test of perils and distractions.

With all that said, it was a terrific experience. The weather was perfect – cool and sunny. The constantly curving roads with too many hair-pins to count and the absolute gorgeous mountain scenery were awesome to take in. Steep climbs up, steep descents, and precious few sections of straight road combined for a wonderful motorcycling experience.





Our total drive time was about 5 hours, which I thought was just perfect; not too much where I'd get weary or lose my focus. We returned to our rental location feeling extremely satisfied with the experience and thinking that I need to come back and do it again.

2026 Event Schedule

Fall Color Ride (EDGE)

* October 18 – 23, 2026

Last Fall Ride (LFR)

* TBD, 2026

* Multi-day events include travel days to and from the event.

2026 Michigan Bridges Grand Tour

Keith Danielson, Creator and Organizer



As in the past, all you will need to do is sign up at a meeting, or request the information directly by emailing me at keithmdanielson@gmail.com to receive the detailed information for the grand tour.

Special thanks to Joe for the article and photos featured in this issue.

Remember: All published articles earn entry into the year-end newsletter drawing AND your fellow members and newsletter editor appreciate you! You

Soft Ground?

Jac Brown



I thought I would share my easy home made solution.

The cabins we are staying at on the EDGE ride have gravel parking areas. They look pretty hard in the pictures but you really can't tell. That got me thinking about all the times I have stopped on soft ground only to worry whether my kickstand will sink into the ground and the bike fall over. In particular, my MV has a really small pad at the bottom of the kickstand and I am planning on taking it to North Carolina.

In my tank bag I carry a kickstand pad made out of a scrap of aluminum sheet. It's 85 thou thick and about 6" x 3". Nothing special here, it was just a scrap piece of aluminum that I dug out of my metal bin. All I did was round over the corners and edges then drilled a hole in one end. Through that hole I tied a string, maybe 3 or 4 feet long. In the tank bag, the string is wound around the aluminum.

If you don't have scrap aluminum, I'll bet you can find many other options. (Beer can with string tied to pull tab (editor))

When I get to a spot with possible soft ground, before I get off the bike I pull it from the tank bag, unroll the string, and use my foot to put the pad under the kickstand. Then I tie the string around my handlebars. That acts as a reminder, sort of like a "Remove before Flight" tag that you might see on aircraft. It also means that I can swing my leg over the bike, raise the kickstand safely, and use the string to pull the kickstand pad up to me. Wind it up, put it in the tank bag, and repeat as needed.

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