

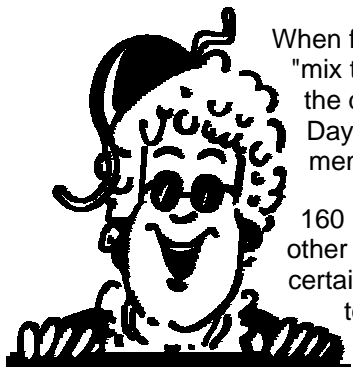


**The Newsletter of the Sport Touring Motorcycle Club**

Vol. 6, No. 3-4 March/April 2002

# *Be a Mother for a Day*

**At Sport Touring MC's signature event, the 101st Annual Mother's Day Road Tour (MDRT)**



When first envisioned in early '94, as the 101st Running of the STMC Gypsy Tour, the plan was to "mix the best aspects of a treasure hunt and a good old-fashioned mountain tour." However, as the date was set for the Saturday before Mother's Day, club members renamed it the Mother's Day Road Tour. Using great routes pioneered by Jon Kadis and a lot of help from our membership, the first MDRT was a huge success.

160 riders showed up for that auspicious beginning making the future look secure. However, that other "mother", Nature, had different ideas. For the next five years it either rained or poured, which certainly dampened member participation and kept attendance down to a trickle. Something had to be done.

So in 2000, club members decided to change the date to the Sunday before Mother's Day. Like rejetting carbs, this made other modifications necessary. The club had to change from AMA District 2 to District 34 and move the starting location from the State Line Lookout to the Red Apple Rest. These changes brought a vast improvement in performance. Not only did Mother Nature smile on us, attendance was up as well.

Now in its 11th year as a club, STMC is proud to present the 9th running of the 101st Annual Mother's Day Road Tour. Thanks to the participation of our members, this event is truly unique in the world of one-day motorcycle events.

One reason that makes MDRT unique is the ride itself. 100 miles on some of the finest roads and scenic routes this area has to offer, ridden at your own pace. No one has to worry about missing check points, playing card games, going too slow or too fast. It's just a great ride on great roads with plenty of curves and scenery.

Another unique feature is the bike show. This event doesn't give awards for the "Ugliest Rider" or who traveled the furthest on a bald tire. Instead, the Sport Touring Motorcycle Club stages a judged event at the finish that awards the motorcycles! Awards include: Best Custom, Best Touring Bike, Best Standard, Best Sport Bike, Best Cruiser, Best Vintage Bike and the always interesting Best Special. Past winners have included '48 Panheads, RC 30's, KTM Dukes and the ever present custom Ducatis.



And don't forget about all the door prizes to be given away! Thanks to local motorcycle dealerships, you could win anything from a gift certificate to a T-shirt to chain lube to who knows what.

This is the only event that our entire membership is encouraged to participate in. So why not help the club make this MDRT the best ever! Volunteer your time and effort. Show your pride in STMC. Heck, just show up May 5th for the mother of all rides. Ride safe, ride far, and ride often!

*A BlastBunker Production*

# *New American Motorcycle Unveiled at Javits Show*

[Editor's Note: The following was first published on the NYCMOTO mailing list on February 4, 2002. Due to continued staff reductions here in The BlastBunker following the dot-com bust, certain facts may not have been fully checked for accuracy.]

At a press conference late Monday, the CEO of Johnson Marine, makers of Johnson outboard marine engines and other recreational equipment, unveiled a new line of heavyweight cruiser style motorcycles designed to compete head to head with industry leader Harley-Davidson.

Peter Long, Johnson brands marketing manager said, "We have studied the market and determined that Harley, while highly successful, has narrowly missed the mark when targeting motorcycle buyers". Long added, "We, at Johnson, are convinced our product hits the target dead center and promises to draw sales away from Harley-Davidson in a way no other motorcycle has been able to accomplish".

The new line of bikes, marketed under the name **'Big Johnson Motorcycles'**, will, according to Long, deliver what Harley has only promised. "Our research shows that this, a Big Johnson, is what Harley buyers are really after".

At the unveiling of the new line Monday, several current Harley owners agreed. "When I bought my Harley, what I really needed was a Big Johnson", said one Harley owner." But I see now that riding a Harley is no replacement for having a Big Johnson."

Manager Long also said that his company would follow the lead of Harley-Davidson and cash in on a huge market for non-motorcycle related products. "We realize that not every guy can have a Big Johnson", said Long, "But image is very important to people. If they don't have a Big Johnson, they at least want to project the image of having one."

Asked if he anticipated Big Johnsons showing up in the hands of Harley owners, Long said it was unlikely. "I just don't see the need to have a Harley if you have a Big Johnson", he said. "And I can't imagine someone who spends all their resources to acquire a Harley having a Big Johnson. I think it boils down to this - You either have a Harley, or you have a Big Johnson, but you are not likely to have both. "Given the choice", said Long. " I think most guys will opt for the Big Johnson".

Another force driving sales for the company will come from women. A survey of the wives and girlfriends of nearly 1,000 potential motorcycle buyers indicates less than 5% would approve of their partner spending \$15,000 on a Harley Davidson. But, when asked if they would be willing to pay the same amount of money to get their partner a Big Johnson, nearly 80% thought that would be money well spent.

One female present at the product unveiling was quoted as saying, "There is no way I will let Lonnie drop 15 grand on another one of those Harleys, but 15 grand to get him a Big Johnson? Well, that something we could both enjoy and it's something he really needs."

Carla Roundheel, manager of the dealership network now being established, said her motto is simple. "I service what we sell."

Big Johnson motorcycles will be traded on the NYSE under the symbol P-ENVY.

## **TheBLAST**

The newsletter of the  
Sport Touring Motorcycle Club

Published monthly. This newsletter's mission is to inform and (especially) to entertain. Opinions and attitudes expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of STMC or its members. TheBLAST content is strictly the responsibility of the editor. Not the author, not STMC and not the members of STMC. Articles and comments should be directed to:

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### **Sport Touring Motorcycle Club 'Bored' of Directors**

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# *The Bluestone 100 Dual-Sport Ride*

by Barry Houldsworth

Having decided to move to New York for 18 months I also made the decision that, if at all possible, I would continue riding both on and off-road. To this end I scanned all the US dirt bike magazines that I could get hold of for clubs with a New York zip code.

Eventually I found a club called the Hudson Valley Off Road Riders and wrote to their president, John Rocklin, explaining my situation and asking if they could provide me with some information. Once in NY I contacted John again and he supplied me with information and even put me in touch with one of their members, Randy, who lived close to my new home town.

The next thing on the agenda was to obtain a suitable bike. After a brief search I managed to find a "leftover" '94 model Yamaha XT350, which seemed to offer a suitable compromise between on and off road. While filling out the paperwork for the bike we discovered that the shop had made an error and the bike they thought was a '94 model was in fact a '95 so I really had got a bargain.

The same day I picked the bike up Randy told me the next HVORR event was on October 1st, just two weeks away. It was to be a 'dual sport' ride of mainly easy sections, which seemed an ideal way of checking out my new bikes prowess, and so I set about frantically putting as many miles on the bike as I could to ensure it was run-in (600 miles) and serviced ready for the event. I just made it, getting the bike serviced on the Friday before the event.

As the start was nearly 100 miles away I had planned to ride up on the Saturday and find a motel nearby, however John would have none of it and offered for me to stay at his place. An offer that I greatly appreciated, especially when you bear in mind that I had still not met him!

I set off Saturday afternoon in glorious sunshine. I used the interstates for the first part and then switched over to Route 17 as soon as possible. Route 17 is a good road



with enough bends to keep things interesting but not slow me down, and it wasn't long before I found myself following the Delaware River on Route 97. This is a fantastic road with spectacular views and becomes one of the ultimate biking roads at a point called Hawks Nest. With a drop on one side, a climbing cliff on the other and a very very twisty road it was great fun even on a dual-sport trail bike. I am told that both BMW and Porsche have made commercials on this section of road and it's easy to see why.

At the firehouse used as the starting point for the event I finally met John, his wife Maria and some other members who were helping to keep those brave souls who opted to camp entertained. One real character had driven all the way from Indiana (about 450 miles) just to ride the event. This gentleman was small and frail looking with a huge wild beard that I half expected a small creature to emerge from any second.

One rider, Tony, a man with a seemingly permanent broad smile, asked if I would follow him while he checked that his bike was running OK and so we set off in the dark for a quick spin into town and then on to John's house for some chain lube. Tony then suggested

some night time trail riding and with a shout of "follow me" promptly disappeared down a large hole dug by John's dog! After picking the bike up we went back to the firehouse on the road where John asked if I would like to help them 'sweep' the course. This involves leaving some time after everybody else and making sure that there are no fallen riders or broken down bikes on the trail. Mistaking enthusiasm for ability I agreed but once back at John's house

I began to wonder if I had done the right thing as John had a stack of trophies and ribbons on top of the TV from various enduros- and not just the easy ones either!

Up at the start by 6:00 am we started signing on the riders and generally getting organized, helped along by someone who had thoughtfully provided coffee and donuts.

Very detailed directions were given, with most people having roll chart holders fitted to their bikes, which certainly makes life a lot easier. Directions were given to the nearest 10th of a mile with instructions to reset your odometer to zero given about every 9 miles to help cope with differences in speedometer readings. In addition, the course had arrows which were numbered and so by finding an arrow you could find where you were on the

roll chart. It was fortunate indeed that so much detail was included in the instructions as some local residents had been pulling the arrows down, even though most of them didn't even know what event was going to be put on!

By 9:00 am the car park was getting full, with about 75 riders turning up, and after a riders briefing people set off in small groups. Unfortunately "Indiana" was having real problems getting his bike started, but as is normal in these situations a small group of willing helpers was soon on hand, each with their own home brewed remedies, and after some fiddling with the spark plug and a few pushes round the car park the bike finally fired and seemed to be running normally.

The sweeper group that I was to ride with consisted of seven riders and we finally set off at about 10.30 am. Initially my new bike felt very strange once we got off-road and I had very little confidence in the ability of the tyres to find grip on the loose surface, but after letting them down a bit and softening the suspension things started to work better and I was soon chasing hard as the other riders vanished in to the distance. It wasn't long before we caught up with some tail enders and we stopped to let them move on. After catching them a third time John gave them directions on how to cut out a large section and then get back on the course and we set off again.

The pace was very fast compared to my previous experiences. It may have been a gentle ride out for those guys but I found chasing down dirt roads and woodland paths at 40-60 mph kind of hairy, however I seemed to be coping and it was actually getting easier as I got used to the bike.

We caught up with the slower riders again at the lunch stop just as they were leaving so we stopped and took time to eat lunch. After lunch it didn't take long to catch them tail enders again. We followed them for a while until they finally made the decision that they weren't going to make it in time and headed back to the firehouse by road.

It was now 3:30 pm and we had only covered half of the course and with an expected ride time for participants of 8 hours we had a lot of catching up to do. The pace was upped again but I was now finding it easier to keep up, however in the woods sections these guys were blisteringly fast (hence all the trophies) but I was never more than a couple of minutes behind and they graciously overlooked my tardiness.

Towards the end of the course we encountered a chap who had deliberately blocked the road with his car. He was complaining that bikes had been using this (state owned and maintained) road all day and he didn't like it.

John carefully tried to explain that this was a once a year event and it was in fact a public. Our friend was not very receptive to this having "just spent a million dollars on a weekend house" and when it was obvious that no amount of talking would make any difference to him we just started the bikes up and went around his car. I think if we had stayed any longer John (normally a calm type of person so I am told) might have done something to regret.

We finally arrived back at the finish for our chicken dinner (included as part of the event for all participants) at about 6:00 pm, total distance 174 miles with about 70 percent on dirt roads or woodland trails. Everybody enjoyed it with many compliments on the route marking and general organization. There had only been one breakdown, which was picked up by the truck driven by Tony, and no other problems. Indiana was there with an ear-to-ear grin shaking the hand of anybody who came within ten feet of him and telling everybody that this event had been something to remember for the rest of his life.

We all said our good-byes and, not feeling like riding another 100 miles, I accepted the offer to stay at John & Maria's place again. Tony arrived shortly after we got back and we all stayed up talking until about 11pm and then got our heads down for a sound sleep. It had been quite a long day.

The next morning I got up early, breakfasted with John & Maria and finally left the house at about 8.00 am. It was still a touch fresh (40 degrees F) and misty, and I enjoyed watching the deer eating only about 40 feet away from me before I started the bike and set off for home.

Back down Route 97 and through Hawks Nest again. As I left Port Jervis onto Route 84 which climbs up to about 1200 feet. I suddenly realized I was riding along with a smile on my face, but this turned to a big grin when I looked to the left to discover the sun shining down on to the top of billowy white clouds that were below me. What a sight! The rest of the ride home seemed to take no time at all as I reviewed the weekend in my head.

This was one of the most enjoyable weekends I have had for a long time; spent doing my favourite pastime; in beautiful countryside; with friendly people; and my new bike had actually performed beyond my expectations.

Having been involved in event organization before I know what a mammoth task this must have been and my thanks go to all those who helped organize this event, but especially to John and Maria for hospitality beyond the call.

-- Barry Houldsworth

# Barry's Beemer Lament

Or, "How I Learned to Love My New BMW In Spite of Itself"

by Dr. Barry Ellman

[Editor's Note: The following story was compiled from a recent STMC Magpie thread. After some minor editing it is now published here for the full membership to enjoy. No permission was sought from the various contributors, including Barry!]

Okay, let me go on record by saying I love my new BMW! (An R1150GS, thank you.) However, the first few weeks have required some "adjustment" between the two of us. To be truthful, I've been the one doing the adjusting. But my big brothers in the club say it will all be worth it.

I just discovered that my new bike has this incredible oil "feature". The engineers must have known that motorcycle enthusiasts like to tinker with their bikes. We like to polish them, change the oil, install accessories, etc., so they provided the tinkerer with this fantastic opportunity: The "Seven Step Checking of the Oil" feature for your brand new oilhead!

**Step 1:** Recognize the fact that it is perfectly normal for the bike to burn a quart of oil every 1,500 miles. What's up with that? My Honda 929 now has about 20,000 miles on it, and the oil level is still dead in the middle of the window. I have NEVER added a drop of oil. It has had routine oil changes, every 3-4,000 miles, but no additions in between. How boring is that?

**Step 2:** Don't bother looking for where the oil has gone. It is totally magical. It doesn't leak out of the bike onto the garage floor like a Harley "marking" its spot. It doesn't cause blue smoke out the exhaust. It just disappears!

**Step 3:** Always have a partially filled quart of oil on your possession at all times, because, when it needs oil, it will only need a few ounces at a time.

**Step 4:** You must check the oil level in the site window with the bike on the center stand, AFTER 10 minutes. Looking at the window when it first is put up on the center stand will not give an accurate reading.

**Step 5:** Forget about step 4 until you FIRST put the bike on the kickstand for 10 minutes. THEN put the bike on the center stand. AND WAIT ANOTHER 10 MINUTES! Certainly puts a damper on those quick fill stops at the gas station on the cross country trip.

**Step 6:** Add only three ounces of oil if the level is down to the bottom of the site window, because it doesn't need a full quart. If you overfill, you will RUIN THE ENGINE!

**Step 7:** Repeat step 4-6.....then bang your head against the wall. SCREAM at the top of your lungs. Then thank the BMW engineers for making it such a neat puzzle to decide when the bike needs additional oil.

Let me repeat: I love my new BMW. It has so much CHARACTER! Anyway, it wasn't long before one of my fellow Beemer owners, Ron Barr, sensed my frustration and offered a much simpler alternative:

Check the oil in the morning, after the bike's been on its center stand overnight. If it's in the middle of the sight glass, leave it alone. You cannot ride far enough in one day to burn enough oil to cause a problem. (Even Steve Pappas couldn't.) If the oil is at the bottom of the sight glass, or completely out of sight, add some oil slowly until it's about a quarter or a third of the way up (i.e., slightly below the middle), then stop. That's it. You're done.

Optional: Sit and watch the oil for an hour or two, and you'll see it rise to somewhere in the upper half of the sight glass. (Dan probably does this while he's doing his laundry, but you don't have to.)

Ron, thanks for simplifying this for me. It really isn't complicated after all. And I'll say it again: I love my new BMW!

Which reminds me, can anyone tell me why a totally computerized, fuel injected bike of this caliber needs an enricher lever that has two positions? One that has to literally be held up manually while you start the bike, and then has to be manually lowered back to the closed position after the bike warms up? Even my fuel inject Harley had an "automatic choke". Another gearhead feature, huh?



What's that, you say? It's the "Denmark setting"???? Hmmmm... let me look that up in my owner's manual.... ah, here it is.... "to be used only when the sun has not risen above the horizon in six weeks and ambient temperature below -30 Celsius...." Boy, those engineers at BMW sure are thorough.

By the way, did I mention all the neat noises the R1150GS makes? It is literally a symphony of cacophonous sounds. First, when you start out, the bike makes a sound like the metal kickstand is dragging on the ground. That's normal. Just the ABS solenoids adjusting themselves under the gas tank. Then, as the torque of the engine reaches the worm gears of the drive shaft, you hear a little clunk each time you release the clutch. That's normal.

Then, depending on your speed, and the stops you make, the ABS will re-cycle, doing the little grinding sound again. And the expanding metal parts tend to groan and click-click along the way. But you know something? With earplugs pushed deeply into the ear canals, you hardly hear any of this stuff. No problemo!

Who says I'm going to miss my Harley? All I need to do is put some drag pipes on this thing, and I can start wearing the leather vest and chaps again!

Okay, I'll say it one more time: I love my new BMW!

-- Barry Ellman (a.k.a. DocGonzo)



## STMC Riding Season Resumes April 7, 2002

Members take note: Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> marks the official return of the STMC Riding Season! Come up to the State Line Lookout at 9:00 AM and you'll find Road Captains, route sheets, sunshine and blue skies for your riding pleasure! Okay, maybe we can't guarantee the blue skies, but we'll do our best to deliver the rest. Kickstands up at 9:30 AM sharp! See you there.

## *Packing Light (Really Light)*

by Charles Grey

Okay, here are some tips and tricks that are designed to help you pack "lighter" on this season's motorcycle trips. The advantages are obvious: Less stuff to schlep, less stuff to search through to find a particular item, and perhaps most importantly, less weight on your bike. These tips and tricks, although originally written for a nine-day trip to the Honda Hoot, can be used for any trip of any duration.

On most of my bike trips the only "luggage" I take is a medium-sized, expanding-style, tank bag. The bag has no exterior pockets (regretfully). I stay in a motel or hotel every night, i.e., I don't "camp."

The first step for me is always spreading out on a bed everything that I think I might need or want to take. For a long, multi-day trip I will take the following items:

**T-Shirts:** On a weeklong trip I'll take seven t-shirts. Of these, at least half are "disposable". This means I'll wear them riding all day, use them at night to wipe down the bike, and then they are discarded. One less item to carry the next day! A couple of "good" T-shirts also serve as "dress-up" wear for the occasional dinner at a nicer restaurant. (And I'll probably buy one or two new ones at the event I'm attending.)

**Jeans:** Good idea to have one pair for those days when you'll be walking around away from the bike.

**Underwear:** I only need two or three pairs. I try to wash one pair every night wrapping it in a towel to squeeze as much water out as possible to facilitate quicker drying.

**Socks:** Two pairs are sufficient. I wash one pair every night. Like the underwear, if you should skip a night you still have at least one clean item available.

**Shoes:** My Tiva sandals are terrific for walking around when riding the bike is not involved. Like, for example, you cleaned and covered your bike for the night and you just want to walk into town or down the block for a bite to eat or a beer.

**Bathing suit:** The bathing suit, in addition to being worn in or around the motel pools, will also double as a pair of shorts. I have one of those thin, loose, nylon-type ones that dry very quickly.

**Money:** Some folks prefer traveler's checks. I prefer cash. I usually take a few hundred along with my ATM card, and will always tuck four or five "twenties" inside my bike's instruction manual and store it on the bike for emergencies. I also keep some small bills inside the map pocket of my tank bag for tolls and gasoline.

**Personal:** I also pack SMALL containers of shampoo, mouthwash, toothpaste, deodorant, sunscreen and insect repellent.

**Bit & Pieces:** I include see-through freezer-type zip-lock bags for all clothing items, plus other things like Ibuprofen, chewing gum, Band-Aids, insect bite balm, lip balm, hand cream, a cover for the bike, and a cable lock. I also bring an assortment of maps cut or photocopied to include only selected areas of interest (you don't really need a map of the entire eastern USA!) Throw in a few bungee cords, including one of the "net/cargo" types, and a Leatherman-type device that includes several screwdrivers, a knife blade, and small scissors. Finally, some lightweight rain gear and small cans of chain lube and spray wax are tossed in as well.

Now, and pay attention here, you are NOT going to put all of this stuff in your tank or saddlebags. You'll pack for only half your trip. The other half will be mailed (I prefer FedEx) to a known destination approximately halfway through your trip. Just mark the box "hold for arrival."

Inside that box, in addition to the fresh clothing, you'll also have a preaddressed label with your home address, and some of that strong transparent packing tape. After removing the new stuff from the box, pack any dirty clothing (or other stuff) that you're not going to need. Remember to send back home anything that you may have purchased that you're not going to use. Put the new label on the box, seal it up and bring it to the post office or call FedEx for a pickup.

Continue to discard the "disposable" T-shirts at every opportunity. By the time you're ready to come home your tank bag should be only half full!

Concerning the actual packing, I pack with a view toward what I'm going to need and when I'm going to need it. Right on top should be rain gear and the rain cover for your tank or tail bag. Everything should be packed in (clear) plastic bags. This serves to keep stuff dry and to keep clean stuff separated from dirty stuff, and makes everything feel more organized. Keep everything neat (clean as well as dirty stuff) and as flat as possible (although you can roll up socks and stuff them in tank bag corners). I also pack my sunglasses, Ibuprofen, radar detector, cell phone, and M&M snacks near the zipper opening so that I don't have to totally unzip the bag to get at these frequently-used items.

I also leave my (very tentative) itinerary with both my wife, my business partner, and with a co-worker. (And, I'm very clear that I will NOT be calling into the office to check voice- or e-mail-it is, after all, a vacation!) I also leave a list of my passwords for both my home computers and for my computers at the office. It's also a good idea to let someone know where a spare key to your bike is (in the event you lose yours). I let my wife know that I've laid out tools in the garage that I might need that can be FedExed to me in the unlikely event that I need them. Don't forget to take any bike documentation and medical insurance cards.

Most importantly, just ride. Turn left or right every so often...just passed an interesting road? Turn around and go back to explore it. Your daily riding itinerary is up to you, so don't be afraid to change it. Discover some roads that aren't on your map, or spend extra time visiting one of the many small towns you'll pass through along the way. Taken this way, every trip has the potential to become one of the best motorcycle trips you've ever had!

So...ride far, ride often, and ride light! -- Charles

### ***This Sunday... Ride with Sport Touring Motorcycle Club!***

Sport Touring MC rides any Sunday that the roads are dry and the temperature is at least 40 degrees. We depart from the STATE LINE LOOKOUT in Alpine, NJ at 9:00 a.m. The State Line Lookout is located on the Palisades Interstate Parkway (north) between exits 2 and 3. STMC invites members and non-members alike to join us for Sunday rides. If you choose to ride with us, be sure to bring a bike in good condition, with good tires and brakes, and current legal paperwork. You must be wearing PROPER PROTECTIVE GEAR in the form of a helmet, boots, gloves and motorcycle jacket. Have a FULL GAS TANK as most rides exceed 250 miles. For more details, call the STMC Hotline after Thursday of each week at (201) 487-4958.

## Mark Your Calendar

April	1	Joe Hughes Birthday
	1	April Fools Day
	3	Jeff Wilt Birthday
	3	Steff Feld Birthday
	7	Daylight Savings Time begins
	10	Woody Halevy Birthday
	11	Peter Conti Birthday
	15	Income Taxes Due
	18	Bart Diaz Birthday
	22	Earth Day
	28	Dan Morrow Birthday
	28	Remote Start Sunday - TBA
	29	Remote Meeting Monday

## **Motorcycling Short Takes**

If the countryside seems boring, stop, get off your bike, and go sit in a ditch long enough to appreciate what was here before we HAD roads.  
Body-steering! *Countersteering!* Body-steering! *Countersteering!*  
(Chant to the beat of "Duck Season! Rabbit Season!")

## **Quik Shifts...**

**STMC greets the New Season!**

**April 7, 2002**

**Meet at 9:00 am, kickstands up  
at 9:30 am sharp!**

**April 14 & 21 - TBA**

**Road Captains, these dates  
available for your new routes!**

**April 28<sup>th</sup>**

**Remote Start Sunday - TBA**

**May 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Mother's Day Road Tour  
Red Apple Rest, Rt. 17,**

**Details will be announced  
On the STMC Hotline  
(201) 487-4958**

**...And on the STMC Website  
[www.SportTouringMC.com](http://www.SportTouringMC.com)**

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