



The Newsletter of the Sport Touring Motorcycle Club

Vol. 6, No. 7-11 Fall 2002

Attention Members: Get Out the VOTE!

by Jeff Wilt, STMC Secretary and Nominating Committee Chairman 2002

It hardly seems like two years since we've done this, but once again we are considering new STMC officers for the two-year term January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2004. I am pleased to have been asked to chair the Nominating Committee. Other committee members are Ron Barr, Bruce Egenhauser, Dan Morrow, Joe Niemeck and Marty Trionfo.

The Nominating Committee is charged with presenting a slate of officers for the general membership's consideration. Additional nominations will be accepted from the membership-at-large up to the date of the actual vote. **The vote will take place at the regular STMC Monday meeting, on November 11, 2002 at the Fireplace Restaurant, Route 17 North, Paramus. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. sharp.**

In the past, a member had to be present at the meeting in order to vote. This year, we will accept proxy ballots returned to my e-mail address no later than 11:59 p.m. Sunday, November 10, 2002. **The e-mail address is jwilt@warwick.net.** E-mail received after that time will not be counted. The sender will very likely NOT be notified that their e-mailed proxy will not count because...well, I'll be SLEEPING, then WORKING the next day!!!

I'm pleased to introduce the STMC Nominating Committee's Slate of Officers for the 2003 - 2004 term:

President	- Doug Tuero
Vice President	- Ron Barr
Secretary	- Marty Trionfo
Treasurer	- Jim Judd

I want to thank both the nominees and the Committee itself. I'm quite proud of how the cogs of the great STMC machine turned in this regard.

Please come out and cast your vote in person, November 11, 2002 at the Fireplace Restaurant.

Blast Editors Captured!

Like the Cliff Swallows of Capistrano, who return each spring to nest on the walls of the Mission San Juan Capistrano, your well-intentioned but woefully unreliable newsletter has returned. Unlike the swallows, however, we return in the fall, and we intend to stick around this time.

You ask, "What happened?" Well, don't ask. Let's just say we've spent last few months struggling through a conflict of faith. Or maybe we argued too much over the acceptable use of a dangling participle. Maybe the inkjet ran out of paper. It really doesn't matter, because we have now returned.

This issue has been hastily assembled and shoved through the mail slot, hopefully reaching you before our November 11th election day. It's still unclear how often TheBlast will be published, but a new issue every other month seems like a reasonable expectation. As before, this is YOUR newsletter, so please share your ideas, anecdotes and two-wheeled adventures with the club. In the meantime, someone fetch my slingshot 'cause here come those confounded birds again...

**Marty Trionfo, Blast Editor
& Chief Whip-Cracker**

The Europass

by Brian Rathjen

It's no secret that, in the past, I have been fairly vocal about the way some friends of mine seem to attack the road with, let's say, reckless abandon. And, although I did believe in being more aggressive on my bike than the average soccer mom in her mini-van, I always felt that the passing of every single vehicle in my way was unnecessary and dangerous. I guess I still do.

But, being that I was quick to push my opinion a number of times to STMC'ers, I must also be just as quick to point out when I have been wrong. Shira and I have spent a lot of time this year across the Atlantic in Europe. First the British Isles and more recently the Alps region.

The attitude of riders over there is far different from most riders in the USA. In Europe, you will rarely see the beanie helmets and the lack of protection that is so prevalent in the States. Motorcycles are far more accepted by the general public, and most continental drivers got their start on a bike of some kind.

They all wear proper gear, and all seem to have a serious and professional attitude about their riding. For the most part they all seem very talented. In Europe, motorcycles are not only allowed to aggressively pass...it's expected. It is common place to see bikes make their way between cars, at speed and into open space ahead of them. It's safer, when done properly, and it works. As riders come up on slower traffic, they slow and put a blinker on; as the car drivers see them the cars then move to the right (European car drivers have it all over their American counter-parts.) With a quick acceleration the bike moves swiftly past the cars and continues on its way. I call it the Europass.

Watching the Europeans I realized where I had seen this attitude and style before. I get to see a lot of riding groups, but there are only one or two that consistently seem to have the right attitude and the right gear. And only one I

know of whose riders work at getting better.



Sport Touring MC.

So STMC...mea culpa. (Especially to a few of you, and you know who you are...)

Although I have seen STMC spin away from the original intention (which was more touring than sport) it has evolved into something very rare these days in the United States. A group of riders that are not only passionate about riding, but also competent and serious about their skills and talents.

So guys, be careful but stay confident... you've got a lot over all the rest. --Brian

TheBLAST

The newsletter of the
Sport Touring Motorcycle Club

Published when the mood strikes us. The newsletter's mission is to inform and entertain. Opinions and attitudes expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of STMC, its members, or even the editor. Articles and comments should be directed to:

Editors John Funke, Marty Trionfo
john@jwfunke.net (201) 768-7962
mtrionfo@2kidsmedia.com (201) 914-9593

Sport Touring Motorcycle Club 'Bored' of Directors

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Social Director Bruce Egenhauser
Most Ardent Rider Charles Grey

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Ride Report : September 29, 2002

Boogie Oogie Oogie: A Jazz Improvisation

by Frank Sole

Today was the second run to the Roscoe diner, this time from the Red Apple rest. Woody Halevy was today's Road Captain, and there was about sixteen STMC'ers ready to ride. We divided into three groups led by Woody, Joe Hughes and Jon Kadis.

I decided to join Jon's group, and we started out after Woody. After about fifty miles or so I realized that we were "off the route" and that Jon was doing his "GPS" thing. Needless to say it turned into a blast and we ended up being the first to arrive at the diner. Bill's group showed up soon after followed by Joe and his crew.

It was a beautiful Fall day and the roads were all good. The diner had lots of room, the food was good and the service was excellent. This was a special day indeed because I believe it is the first time Bill Jones actually sat down to have lunch on a ride. I have the picture to prove it. It probably had something to do with the fact that he was riding two-up with Emily, and she nixed Bill's lunch idea of a hot dog in a gas station. Thank you, Emily!

By the time we headed out after lunch it had warmed up enough for me to take off my vest for the ride home. Whatever the temperature was it was perfect for riding a motorcycle. --Frank



The Kadis Quartet: new member Eric Eisenberg, Michael Weiner, Jon "The Riff Master" Kadis, and Frank Sole.



"Waitress! Another donut!" STMC's Emily and Bill Jones, Joe Niemec and Doug Tuero.

Woody's World: The Art of Lane Splitting

by Woody Halevy

A lot of Internet traffic filled the bandwidth of the tube regarding motorcycle lane splitting. Some officials decided that it is illegal. The reason for their decision is probably based on Evel Knievel myths and stories. I even heard one time on 1010 WINS Radio Evel Knievel talks about lane splitting as dangerous. Is it really dangerous?

I have been riding around a million miles in my lifetime. Lane splitting is something that I do every day. For many years in Manhattan, I probably split lanes with hundreds of cars every day. Occasionally, I touch a car with my mirror or my foot pegs. It never made me fall or get hurt. So what's the fuss all about? Nobody has the answer. California will allow that despite the law that forbids it. Do they have more fatalities then others?

Lane splitting is thought to be a motorcycle getting to the same lane that is currently being used by a car, moving or stationary. We as motorcyclists, don't understand why a cager gets mad when we split a lane with his or her car. In some cases, they will try to swerve towards us just to show that we are wrong. Is this dangerous? I doubt it, they usually don't succeed to hurt us, no more that we can hurt ourselves.

Now, let's look at it from the other side. You ride alone in your lane, and a car is trying to share it with you. Ahhh, now you are mad. Why? The car did exactly what we do all the time. My philosophy is that the driver is right. We should all share the road, cars and bikes, bikes and cars. This is just a different type of driving and riding. All the European countries do it and have less fatalities per mile than we have. I heard so many cases of a motorcycle rear-ended resulting in injury or fatality. Lane splitting is your best protection from that.

In my recent trip to Israel, I spent five days on a small Honda CH. It's a 250 Automatic that can go 60 MPH comfortably and split lanes with ease. The first time that a car tried to split a lane with me, I felt that it was wrong, but learned very quickly, that the road belongs to both of us. Three days later, I did what I learned in order to survive the lane splitting country riding style: A car in the rearview mirror means "let the car lane split" and everybody is happy.

As a rider in the city, lane splitting may save your life, and will definitely save you time. A lot of time. In the winter, you see the ice, in the summer you see the oil on the pavement, and you can see better the face of the driver in front of you. Do yourself a favor, split lanes. The police don't like it, but also usually will not ticket you for that. A warning is a gift from the authorities, and if once in a blue moon you pay a fine for that, think of all the time and gas that you saved, and smile to yourself.

Now imagine that: A crowded city like Tel-Aviv, a major intersection in the center of town, has about half of the vehicles on two wheels. All the two wheelers are in the first row like the grid on the racetrack. A green light is the nicest thing to see, and the sounds are the beautiful music that Mozart never wrote. Wait a few seconds, and it starts all over again. Now imagine the same without lane splitting. I would still be standing there waiting to get to the airport...

For me it was like watching a Pac-Man game. I stood aside looking at all the bikes, scooters, Vespa, bicycles, funneling between the cars to get to the beginning of the pack, oh, what a great view, and I take a guess in my heart, who's going to be first, who's going to cut from rightmost lane to make a left turn, and who is going to be the noisiest of all. A teenager on a moped, an old lady on a scooter, a soldier on a CBR, and everybody understands the dynamics of moving traffic.

We need to send the officials, cops and judges to a short course to Europe or Israel, or better yet China to learn how the rule of "No Real Rules" can work to your advantage, help the environment, save on pavement, save time and can be summed up in one word: Smart. --Woody

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. 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.

The Accidental Motorcyclist

Motorcycle Misadventures, Mishaps & Mayhem

Contributed by Barry Houldsworth

While standing in the garage of a friend I noticed a sheet covering something that looked suspiciously bike shaped. I inquired about it and the sheet was pulled back to reveal an old Honda CD175 which had been sitting under that blanket for over seven years (the bike was nearly 20 years old!). Told that I could have it if I would just get it out of his garage, I jumped at the chance to get my hands on such raw power (I had a Suzuki TS100 at the time) and spirited it away at the next opportunity. Although I knew nothing about motorcycle mechanics (or any other form come to that) I managed to disassemble the whole thing and, after some diligent work cleaning the carbs I had a runner!

Wow! What a difference this bike was. Suddenly overtaking was possible (in the right conditions) – and the only down side was the cost in gas (about \$4 per gallon in the U.K.) as, due no doubt to my ham-fisted rebuild, the bike managed to achieve astoundingly poor mileage for a 4-stroke machine. Still, my enthusiasm was undiminished and I ventured out whenever I could in the confident knowledge that I would not smell of 2-cycle oil on my return. Ahh, the joy!

Shortly after this I was out cruising on a sunny Sunday and enjoying the scenery when the bike gave that well known splutter. With a practiced air I reached down to switch to reserve when, OH MY GOD! It was already in the reserve position. At that moment one of those combination Gas station and car dealer came in to view complete with a bright red neon 'Open' sign that was lit. I was saved! I just made it, coasting on to the forecourt and I pulled up at the pump and waited for the attendant....and waited....and waited. A quick investigation revealed that the red neon sign was in fact lying. Hmmmm...what to do?

After some thought I vaguely remembered someone telling me that gas can get trapped on one side of the tank and that it can be sloshed over in an emergency. Sure enough, there was some gas in there. I agitated the bike as best I could to move it to the desired location and then tried to start it. It was kick-start only and, after numerous exhaustive efforts it had coughed a few times but failed to ignite. It just needed a better kick – I surmised – and the best way to do that would be to push it.

I lined the bike up across the forecourt, selected first gear, pulled in the clutch and launched myself as fast as I could. Once up to speed I popped the clutch and...cough....cough, cough...YES! It was running again...and...err... so was I!

In my ignorance of these things I had not actually jumped aboard when letting the clutch out and now found myself desperately trying to keep pace with this powerful monster of a machine. Taking huge strides in an effort to keep pace I found that I could not get ahead of it enough to jump on board, the brake and clutch were out of reach and I quickly realized that I was running desperately short of runway! Finally, in an effort to avoid smashing in to several shiny cars up for sale I had to ditch and pulled the bike down with me. There was a horrible crunching/grinding noise as we both settled on the ground and, as the dust settled, I took a moment to take stock. Yes, I was OK (other than my pride), the bike seemed fine and...wait! It was still running!!!!

I righted the bike, pulled myself together and set off for the closest garage that I knew would be open. Mercifully I made it without further incident and, while filling the bike, I had time to ponder on the circumstances. Finally it dawned on me that with the gas tap on the left, which was the direction I had pulled the bike, I might never have made it to this gas stop without leaning the bike over at such an acute angle (i.e. horizontal). So, remember, each cloud has a silver lining or, as the saying goes, inconvenience is merely a misperceived adventure. --Barry

Top Ten Reasons To Ride with Hard Bags

1. When you ride with hard bags, every ride is a "tour".
2. Ability to pick up fresh veggies at farm stands on the way home.
3. Hard bags - the world's most expensive sliders.
4. They only weigh a few pounds each. If you are concerned with that kind of weight difference how do you manage riding after lunch?
5. When pulled over by the police, you can proclaim, "I'm no crazy kid on a sportbike, and this heavy touring machine can't go that fast!"
6. Ability to stash funny-looking riding gear before going into diners.
7. Impress other riders with your explanation of how the bike was aerodynamically designed with the bags, so you actually go faster.
8. Ability to carry an oscilloscope to diagnose pesky surging problems on BMW's "legendary" boxer engine.
9. Great place to put stickers from far away places.
10. You're always ready for a party – not luggage, but beer coolers.

The above was submitted by Dan Morrow, a longtime member of STMC, faithful BMW GS rider, and self-described "hard-bagger".

Quik Shifts...

***November begins
Winter Schedule
Sunday Rides are Potluck
Meet at 9:00 AM***

***December 14
STMC Holiday Party
Holiday Inn – Suffern, NY
Info: BruceEgen@AOL.com***

***Dec / Jan / Feb
Sunday Rides
Meet at 10:00 AM***

Weekly Updates on the STMC Hotline

(201) 487-4958

...And on the STMC Website

www.SportTouringMC.com

***Sport Touring Motorcycle Club
260 Riverside Drive
Suite 3F
New York, NY 10025***

