



The Daily Planet

Official Newsletter of
**The San Francisco Northstars
Motorcycle Club**

Volume 12, Issue 8

November 8th, 1999

'99 Calendar

- Nov. 20 **President's Ride**, René LaPrevotte
Nov. 24 **Club Meeting**, S.F. Brewing Co.
Nov. 26-29 **Desert Dirt Ride & Camping I**,
Earl Minkler
Dec. 12 **Surprise Ride**, Mark Anderson
Dec. 22 **Club Meeting**, S.F. Brewing Co.
Dec. 26-31 **Desert Dirt Ride & Camping II**
(*the sequel*), Earl Minkler

Oct. 27th Club Meeting

Members present: Mark Anderson, Richard Brandt, Matt Brockway, Mike Chaplin, Steve Hursh, Hans Koolhoven, Patrick Lydon, Alan Macias, Bret Morshead, John Munger, Allan Paul, & Gary Thomas.

Guests: Lisa Brazieal and Wiyanna Oakley (George Perica's daughter).

A few of us had arrived on time, but were wondering whether the rain forecast had scared most folks onto their couches in front of their TVs. Eventually Patrick Lydon & enough others straggled in and we had a quorum. The previous meeting's minutes, actually a copy of the last newsletter, was skimmed over & approved.

New Business

NEWS FLASH - The President's Ride, by René LaPrevotte, has been re-scheduled again to **Saturday, Nov. 20th**. To give René time to drive home from Folsom that morning, we'll meet at the east parking lot at the Lucas Valley Rd. Exit at Hwy-101 in Marin at 11AM.

René will lead us around his favorite north-bay roads and back to the **Old Washoe House** Bar & Restaurant in Petaluma for an early (~5pm) dinner. The Old Washoe House (at Roblar Rd & Stoney Pt Rd, Petaluma, CA 94952, 707-795-4544) was built in 1839 as a roadhouse for the stage-coach route to San Francisco. It has enjoyed a long and colorful history, including many years as a brothel. Mark your calendars & don't miss this great ride & dinner!

Y2K OFFICER ELECTIONS Coming Soon!

The **November 24th meeting** will be the last chance to make nominations for the 2000 slate of officers. A few nominations were made during the Oct.27th meeting, but the list will be finalized in November. This is a very important meeting folks, so please work it into your schedules & get yer butts to the S.F. Brewing Co. The ballots will be included in the December newsletter & are due back by the next meeting.

The **December 29th meeting** was moved to **Dec. 22nd** to prevent a conflict with the Dec. Desert Dirt Ride & the holidays. The election votes will be count then.

Time to get DIRTY! Desert Dirt Ride & Camping, Nov. 26-29. Earl sez he can't wait til after Christmas, so the annual treks to the Mojave desert are going to start Thanksgiving weekend! Earl, myself, & our boys are going down on Friday, with Earl & Lee staying til Monday. For more info, call Earl. Maps & directions at; <http://silcon.com/~catfish/ns/Cal-City-Maps.html>.

The **December 12th "Surprise" Ride** will be led by **Mark Anderson**. Rumor has it that it might be a Carnegie dirt ride. Stay tuned for further details.

Old Business & Ride Reports

The Club Picnic

President **René** reserved a great site at the Paradise Beach Park in Marin. He marinated 24 steaks to be grilled & brought several cases of beer. In addition to **Susan**, René's brother, & his wife, a few Northstars showed up too; **Patrick Moriarty & Jan, Patrick Lydon & Kelly, Alan Paul, Matt Brockway, & Mark Boyd**. Needless to say, there was plenty of food & beverages. The weather was a bit cool & windy. For a little picnic message from René, see: <http://silcon.com/~catfish/ns/images/rene.mpg>.



Susan with broken leg & crutches from that infamous Rubicon weekend on her dirtbike!

Picnic Photos by Matt Brockway



President of Vice



the BrewMaster



Patrick trying to stay warm, while Jan drank & drank & ...

The same weekend of the picnic was also the annual **Fall Rally** at the **Song Dog Ranch**. **Mark Anderson & Deena** & the dogs trucked it down for the weekend. Mark also announced that Deena is pregnant & a little girl is due next spring!. **Earl Minkler** led a group of MSMCers, including **Mike Chaplin & Megan Hall**, on a great 3-day trip that included a nice motel stay & a *great* dinner in Cambria Friday evening, and the rally on Saturday.

In addition to the usual aerial display from the neighbor & his Pitts, just after a beautiful sunset a minuteman missile was launched from Vandenburg to the west. It was to be the target for an interceptor missile being tested over the pacific. It was an incredible sight watching the 4 stages each fire as it climbed against the back-lit sky of the sunset and left a long-lasting vapor trail after it disappeared from view. WOW, this was seriously COOL! Then the local rock band, Diamond in the Rough, entertained the small crowd of 120 into the night.

Fout Springs-Stonyford Dirt & Camping

Hans & family, Steve Hursh, Mark Anderson, & Joel Buck were getting dirty over the Oct. 9-10 weekend. The area was empty of riders and NO one camping at Davis Flats. The trails were covered in a very fine dust powder that forced large following distances between riders to allow enough dust to settle to see the trail again. It also covered & filled some deep ruts that Joel regretted finding. He got crossed up, heading up a hill with a full head of steam, and it split him off. A cracked clavicle, 4 broken ribs, and riding his XR400 back to camp had him doing some serious moaning. Joel claims that 3 of the broken ribs were the same ones broken earlier in the year on one of the desert trips. OUCH!

Hans put some Ducati billet footpegs on the CR250 engine so little Cloe had a place to put her feet while riding with Dad. Hans has a herniated disk in his back from a kiddie pool attack in the backyard, so he only tolerated about an hour's worth of riding before he was in too much pain. His Doc sez no riding for several months to let this heal up. Steve and Mark had a GREAT time though!

Upper Lake DP Ride by Patrick Moriarty

Brian Halton and I did a dual-sport ride in the Upper Lake area. This is a ride for advanced riders and was originally set up by John Haaker of ISDE fame. It is now run by another guy and is considerably easier. We went up on Saturday about mid morning in the City Bike Luxo Van, topping out a 60mph with an ambient noise level of about 80dba. Brian had assured me the Luxo van would make it and that it was "much quieter".

By the time we arrived the main ride had left so we just went out and pattered around on some single track for a few hours until dark. Conditions were very dry and dust was a factor. The trails were pretty chopped up and full of the dreaded talcum powder dirt that can be difficult to manage. But the trails were empty, the weather was spectacular and the moon was full, so whats not to like?

My new XR400 handled everything nicely. Brian's DR350 had a few troubles starting on occasion, but he

kept up just fine and managed to make it past some moderate sections without problems. We did about 35 trail miles and called it a day. We returned to the town of Upper Lake where we had rooms at the Super 8.

We ran into all kinds of Bay Area dirt and street bike guys, including Craig Hightower (writes for Street Bike) who just got back from the Copper Canyon. Great stories since Ray Roy was along on the trip!

The next day we set out with the main group of about 40 riders. Because Brian didn't have a roll chart and an odometer, I am appointed navigator (Moriarty means navigator or helmsman in Gallic) & led, while Brian dutifully ate dust as I charted the many turn offs and course changes included in the route. These rides are laid out in tenths of miles so frequent re-zeroing is a must. The whole course was laid out almost perfectly. I would have liked more single track but some of the two track was quite challenging given the dry conditions.

This was about a 125-mile ride that was about 70% fire roads and two track and the rest single track. We got about half way through the ride and into some gorgeous high country around Lake Pillsbury, when Master Halton's kick starter became reluctant to retract. At this point he headed back to Upper Lake via the main fire road and I continued on the ride. The highlight was up around Hull Mountain. Beautiful country and good camping all around.

The XR was great and the more I rode it the more I liked it. Plenty of power, excellent trail manners and good brakes. With the high gearing I've installed, it can cruise comfortably at 65mph and now has a top speed of about 85mph. Just a great bike. Never so much as hiccupped the whole weekend.

Bret Morshead got a new **KTM Duke Unicycle** and is having some serious fun breaking it in!

Richard Brandt took a trip up north for a new Russell seat & an evening's stay at the Crater Lake lodge.

Rumor has it that **Roozbeh Chubak** broke/cracked some ribs on the 1st day of a Reno-to-Vegas DP ride, sold the XR650L, and bought a 750 Monster so he could have a *Girlie_Bike™* like his buddy Mulvihill.

John Munger rode his KTM across the backyard, flew over a tent, and got a compression fracture *somewhere!*

Lisa Brazieal did a track day recently on her VFR at Thunderhill with a Triumph Club. Said there were a few crashes though.

Matt Brockway's Death Valley Ride

Story by **Roozbeh Chubak** & photos by **Matt Brockway**.

Additional info from Matt Brockway, Mark Anderson, & Joe Volpe; and/or drivel from the editor.

There were just the five of us: **Matt Brockway** (ride leader), **Earl Minkler**, **Mark Anderson**, **Joe Volpe** and myself. We met for breakfast at Jerry's in Hollister and left promptly at 9 as planned. We were all looking forward to the ride down 25. We rode at a spirited but not an insane pace. Then all of a sudden I saw our leader Matt turn left onto San Benito Lateral! This came as a surprise to me since I had not expected any trickery to get me into dirt riding so early in our ride. My whining about the river we would have to cross (a river that I had done the previous month) fell on deaf ears. I could not evoke any sympathy even among the R1 riders. Pricks!

While Matt was consulting the map before we set off on the SB Lateral, Mark appeared to be deep in thought. At first the object (subject?) of his reflection was not apparent to the rest of us. But suddenly it all became clear. It seemed his R1 was suffering from a major case of asymmetric imbalance: Why, while the rest of us watched carefully, Mark's bike all of a sudden took a position of a 45 degree tilt. All this with absolutely no input from Mark. While Mark was pondering this new development, Matt rushed over and persuaded the bike to return to its more conventional upright position.



By the time we got to the river, Mark had figured out a way to deal with his bike's asymmetrical imbalance. As he rode through the river, using a clever maneuver I had not seen before, Mark dipped his leg deep into the water and scooped up a gallon of water in his boot! All without breaking stride. The extra weight added by the water to the starboard side did the trick and Mark's bike was fully balanced for the rest of the trip.



*According to Mark, it was just his typical water crossing. Apparently his motos have the uncanny ability to seek out the one large hidden rock at all crossings that will deflect the front tire & send it heading upstream to spawn. Mark must then **dab** to help wrestle control away from the genetically-programmed moto and exit the water before its surrounded by horny males.*

We finally made it to Coalinga in one piece. No one questioned why we had selected the dirt road (Old Hernandez) over the sportbike friendly Rt. 198. Certainly not I.

We left Coalinga for the next phase of our ride: Perimeter Tour of California Penitentiaries. None of seemed too impressed with Avenal: Much too pedestrian. But Corcoran was something else. The size of the place (as well as acre after acre of parked cars within its perimeter) was a testament to the number of Bad Boys housed there.

We stopped for lunch in Springville (Rt. 190). It was felt that some nourishment was in order before setting out on those wunnerful twisties on our way to Sherman Pass. Except for a small stretch where the gravel was still loose on recently paved pavement, the surface was absolutely perfect for spirited riding. Earl and Mark led most of the way.

We took a short break at Sherman Pass and were soon joined by a gentleman of pre-geezer age who was riding an immaculate BMW R1100RS. He allowed that he lived in Ontario and sometimes included Sherman Pass on his 200+mile daily jaunts over the weekends. He looked to me like he knew what he was doing. And sure enough, he did. We left him at Sherman pass when we started our descent but he soon caught up with us. He obviously knew the road and it was a joy chasing someone who knew

which were the decreasing radius curves and which were not. I do believe he was a wee bit surprised that he could not lose us.

We stopped for gas at Ridgecrest and this time I went to great lengths to make sure I did not repeat my oversight in January when I had filled up at a Mobil gas station. No, this time I put gasoline in my motorcycle and discovered that my R1100GS runs much better on gasoline than does my Valkyrie on diesel.

It was dark when we left Trona. Doing 100+ in the dark in the desert offers its own challenges. Joe Volpe had his "fuck-you" point-source laser-bright driving lights on. It did help the rest of us see better, but when he was behind me and I would take a curve, his sharply focused light made my own shadow look like an animal ready to jump right into my path. I had not made that many unnecessary emergency applications of my brakes since the time I had been driving while on acid oh so many years ago.

We made it to Furnace Creek and while the more adventurous amongst us went to pitch up their tents, Earl, Mark and I went to our cabins and got ready for dinner. The refreshment before dinner took place in a very noisy bar. A group of wimmin Harley riders -- these were riders and not passengers -- were drinking, being rowdy and shaking their butts at us while they took turns shooting pool. Dizgustin.

The next morning, Saturday, Matt and Joe departed to conquer the dirt road that had laugh at them the previous April. Mark mumbled something about visiting someone in Vay-gas and departed quietly. Earl and I had a couple of ceegars and then left later in the morning for a paved ride in the Valley.

South of Badwater Earl and I tried each other's bikes. My purpose was to show Earl that the GS is not the crappy bike he thinks it is. Earl's purpose was simply to show off his bike. And he was successful at that. I am still in awe of the R1: I expected it to be fast; I expected it to be smooth; but what I had not expected was its refined suspension. How a bike can have a suspension that acts like a sportbike suspension and a touring bike suspension all at the same time, I still don't understand.

Earl and I had lunch at the Cat joint recommended by Mulvihill. The food was excellent. Ribs and beans -- how can you go wrong?

After lunch Earl got that funny look in his eyes and said he needed to go off and explore some of the local roads. He looked at the map; the roads that held his interest all seemed to lead to unincorporated settlements in Nevada! What is going on, I asked myself. Why did Earl bring all his gear with him for just a day ride while he could have easily left it in his room back at the hotel? I have no answer to these questions. But when Earl did show up at

our hotel just after nightfall, he sure looked like the cat who had eaten the canary.

Before dinner I found Matt and Joe at the bar. They had had a successful day taming the dirt road even though there had been a number of incidents in the sand. These had been carefully recorded by Matt and his capable digital camera. (Rumor has it that Matt refused to help Joe lift up his bike after each drop until/unless Joe posed next to the fallen bike for a picture.)



“I’m NOT wounded, you don’t have to shoot!”

Joe wrote: Details, details, details...while I did come off the bike twice, the bike only went down once! Those GSs really know how to crash. The first come off was as I was riding the rim of a deep wash, as the rim degraded into sand and spit me into the rut, I bailed left. When I dusted myself off, I noticed the wash was just the perfect width to keep the bike dead upright !!! All I did was mount the bike, back peddle 25 or so feet, gun it to pop the lip of the wash and rode right through the patch that threw me the first time...sure if it didn't almost get me again !!!

In a little while we were joined by Northstar **Mike Green** who had ridden up from Victorville with his friend Jim. After a couple of snorts at the bar we retreated to Matt & Joe's campsite. More refreshments and a coupla of pizzas made dinner a very festive affair. Mike's friend Jim is a true mensch (*Yiddish for an honorable, honest, or good person*): He took care of the pizza by riding from the campsite to the restaurant TWICE. The first time to order the pizza, the second time to pick it up.

Dinner was not a total success. It turns out that Mike Green's motives in turning up were somewhat self-serving. Sure, he wanted to get together with us, but even more importantly, he was there to seek our advice to deal with a semi-medical problem. I regret to say, much that we

tried, we were unable to come up with any practical solutions that would address special problems associated with riding a motorcycle if one is endowed with a hairy ass. Sorry, Mike.

The only other incident I recall about Saturday night is the 20 minutes I spent buck-naked in my well-lit street level room before discovering that only the lace curtains -- not the main curtains -- had been drawn. I am sure all those visiting German tourists had yet another story about the strangeness of America to relate to their family and friends on their return home.

Sunday was another gorgeous day. Matt who believes in leading by consensus sure designed a return route plan much to the liking of the rest of us. The ride took us up Rt 178 over Walker Pass, and then to Button Willow where we broke for lunch. The choice of the lunch spot was not unanimous. In an earlier lifetime the now-Salvadoran restaurant had been a Mexican restaurant of dubious culinary appeal. Earl started off by ordering a hamburger as his subtle way of protesting the choice of the eatery. But he soon fell into the festive spirit of the occasion and finished off the meal with a delicious dish of fried bananas.



We returned through Coalinga and took the wonderful Rt 198 to Rt 25 to Hollister and then home.

About 1,400 miles in three days. No tickets, no crashes, no unpleasantness whatsoever. A wonderful time was had by all. :-)

Alan Macias reported \$1462 in the treasury and was requested to contact the New Pisa Restaurant in regards to setting up the Club Dinner in mid-January.

Send all editorial comments, classifieds, ride/race reports, etc. to;

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