



THE CENTERLINE

BMW Motorcycle Owners of Georgia, Inc.

June 2005

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the BMW Riders
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American
Motorcyclist
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Perimeter of Georgia 5 Corners Ride

By Wes McCann

Continued from last month's issue.

Well, I've mentioned several times that I had missed turns and roads that I had planned on taking. Now, let me digress for a moment...Lest you think I don't know how to read a map let me explain how I missed the next turn. I was using a Rand McNally paper map of Georgia. I was also using the standard base map which came pre-installed my Garmin GPS's. Neither of these maps provides much detail of local roads, especially in southeast Georgia into Florida where I was now traveling. All I could see on the map and GPS was that HWY 94 was supposed to end, followed by a short stretch of road that looked to be unpaved. The unpaved road led to FL HWY 121. HWY 121 was the "shortcut" to St. Mary's, GA that I was looking for. I arrived at what I thought was the end of HWY 94 about 30 minutes before dawn. Sure enough, there was an unpaved road directly across the intersection. Everything matched what I was expecting to see. I was where I wanted to be, that is, at the start of a "shortcut" to St. Mary's. More on this subject in a moment. But first back to the ride...

Now I readily admit to not being much of a dirt rider. Even though I ride a GS, I admit to a little apprehension when leaving the pavement. Especially when traveling by myself. Then, looking down the unpaved road I could see some taillights disappearing around a turn a couple of miles down the road. They were just about where I figured the dirt road joined HWY 121. Then a truck turned down the dirt road just ahead of me. I thought, "Hey, how bad can the road be? There's plenty of traffic and besides, it's only for a couple of miles." "Come on, you can do it," I was telling myself. After all, I could see where the dirt road ended up ahead and that wasn't too far.



Across the intersection and onto the dirt I rode. The road was hard-packed and smooth. Hey, this is fun! I feel like Jimmy Lewis riding the Paris/Dakar Rally. I pick up the speed a little bit; I'm standing on the foot pegs riding at maybe 25 mph. Boy, am I cool! For a half-mile or so, I picture myself leaving rooster tails of sand. I'm flying off the desert dunes of Dakar. Man, am I an adventurer! Then, almost without warning the hard-packed dirt turns to a deep soft dry-powdery sand. Oh, my gosh! The rear tire loses traction. The front tire starts to plow a deep furrow. The bike is fishtailing. I'm hanging-on for dear life struggling to maintain control. This isn't fun anymore! This is survival! What would Jimmy Lewis do? I don't know...hang on! While I wasn't particularly worried about injury if the bike went down, I immediately thought of how difficult it was going to be to get the GS back upright if it went over. Not to mention the damage that would occur falling over.

Fortunately, I was able to bring the GS to a stop without falling. Taking a moment to collect my wits, I thought maybe this "shortcut" idea wasn't such a good idea

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Club Events...

The calendar is current as of the day of publication, but new events are being scheduled all the time. Please check the website at www.bmw-moga.org to see the latest information.

Sunday, June 5th - Club Meeting

Time: 12 Noon. Unicoi State Park, Pavilion #1

Sunday, July 10th - Club Meeting

Time: 11 a.m. Vogel State Park, Pavilion #4

July 8, 9 & 10th – Club Ride

Camp, Ride and Club Meeting – North Georgia. This is a weekend ride that combines camping at TWO, two club rides, a Club Meeting and plenty of fun (and food)! Camping at TWO Friday, July 8th, 9th & 10th for those wanting to camp the weekend. Ride out of TWO on Saturday, July 9th for a 300 mile loop ride.

Saturday Ride Description: The pace for this ride will be moderate. The total distance of the loop is approximately 300 miles of mostly back mountain roads with plenty of sweepers and twisties. This is going to be an ALL DAY ride! There are some logical “peel off” places for those not wanting to make the entire ride. Franklin, NC is one such place that would reduce the ride distance to about 250 miles. For detailed instructions and turn by turn description of this loop click this link and print the page:

<http://home.mchsi.com/~whaycock/mypage/satloop.html>

Sunday Ride Description: This is a 95 mile loop departing out of Vogel State park after the Sunday, July 10th Club Meeting and lunch. For detailed instructions and turn by turn description of this loop click this link and print the page: <http://home.mchsi.com/~whaycock/mypage/sundayloop.html>

Rendezvous Locations and Times: Camping at TWO on Friday, July 8th – Arrive at your own schedule, check to see where other club members are camped. I will be there early Friday and stake out an area. Dinner at TWO Friday night. Saturday, July 9th ride – Ride departs TWO at 9:30 a.m. Breakfast is served at TWO on Saturday morning. Saturday lunch at the Sweet Water BBQ in Robbinsville, NC. As you come off the Cherohala Skyway (HWY 143) you will intersect US 129. Turn right onto US 129 and travel 1.5 miles into Robbinsville. At the red light (HWY 143) turn left and travel 0.3 miles to the Sweet Water BBQ on your right. Phone 828-479-6862. GPS Coordinates are: N35 19523 W83 47.870. Saturday night – Dinner at TWO. Sunday morning – Breakfast at TWO. Ride to Vogel State park for 10:00 a.m. meeting. Ninety-five mile loop ride departs Vogel State Park after the club meeting and Club provided lunch. The 95 mile loop ride ends at Vogel State Park. For more information contact ride leader Bill Haycock by email: whaycock@mchsi.com, home phone: 706-568-9039, cell phone: 706-580-0100.

Sunday, August 7th – Club Meeting

Time: 12 noon. Moccasin Creek State Park.

Saturday, August 13th – Club Ride

Ride to Wheels through Time in Maggie Valley, NC. Visit “Wheels Through Time” museum in Maggie Valley North Carolina. The pace of the ride is the speed limit and then some. 400 miles roundtrip. Route Start Point: IHOP 920 Market Place Boulevard, Cumming, GA 30041-7920 (770) 888-2911, (GPS N34 10.808 W84 07.998). For those that are interested we are having breakfast at 7:30 a.m., riders meeting at 8:20 a.m. and departure at 8:30 a.m. Lunch will be at the Saratoga Café, 2723 Soco Road, Maggie Valley, NC 828 926 1448 (GPS: N35 30.711 W83 04.468). For more information contact ride leaders Howard Meiseles & Ellen Welter at Howard@howard-meiseles.com or Erw@erwcomputers.com, or cell phone: 661-312-3010 or 818-634-3235

Sunday, September 11th – Club Meeting

Time: 12 noon. Claystone Park on Lake Tobesofkee, Shelter # C209. 6600 Moseley Dixon Road, Macon, GA 31210-8513; phone 478-474-8770.

Sunday, October 2nd – Club Meeting

Time: 12 noon. Amicalola State Park, Pavilion #5.

Sunday, November 6th – Club Meeting

Time: 12 noon. High Falls State Park.

Other Events...

June 5th – Ride for Kids

Starts at North Point Mall, Alpharetta, GA. Registration opens at 7:00 a.m. and closes at 9:15 a.m. Rain or shine!! Ride travels through scenic countryside, with police escort. CELEBRATION OF LIFE program at endpoint includes award presentations to individuals, chapter/clubs and festivities. If you're interested in this project, and/or need more information please contact Buster Moldenhauer at buster@moldenhauer.us or 770-487-3615. Even more info is available at www.ride4kids.org.

July 12th – MDA's Rolling On Ride

3rd annual Rolling On Ride to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Money raised at the ride will help fund local patient service programs including cost-free clinic visits and the purchase of wheelchairs and leg braces. For more details please call 770-621-9800.

July 14th - 17th – Atlanta Summer Bike Fest

At Lakewood Fairgrounds/Exhibition Center, www.atlantabikefest.com or 877-247-3337.

Trip to Atlanta

By Theo van der Velde

After some business meetings in Atlanta I had the opportunity to take time off and Jane and Bill Moore were nice enough to invite me over to go ride with them and attend the BMWMOGA rally at Hiawassee. During my stay I rode on one of Jane's bikes, a F650GS, with very wide cases (I found this out the first day of riding – don't ask how!). Needless to say the rest of the trip was spent without cases, which was more practical for me as I am not accustomed to carrying anything wide on my Kawasaki ZX-12R. The GS was a lot of fun to ride, especially on the mountain roads with lots of curves.



We drove through Deals Gap, Cherokee Skyway and I took it out to the Blue Ridge Parkway. We crossed some unpaved roads too (Chattahoochee National Forest), which the light GS handles magnificently easily. Driving around that area is a fantastic experience, we don't have anything like that in the Netherlands, since the country is mainly flat. Some challenging parts did remind me of the Swiss or French Alp regions in Europe, which I highly recommend if you get the chance to go there. So finally I was able to see the BMWMOGA rally Jane spoke often about. She had sent me pictures of previous rallies and it looked like a lot of fun. I was surprised by the great number of people that showed up. I also was surprised by a vendor's tent coming to visit me at 5 a.m. because of a gust!

All in all a lot of fun, I especially liked the Poker run for dual sport bikes, which I got to ride with Jane and Bill's son, Adam. Maybe I will get the chance of riding in your country again some time. I got to meet a lot of very nice and interesting people while over there, did some great riding – and I do hope I get to come back. Thank you for a wonderful time, drive safe.

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If You Can Read This, Thank a Teacher...Or,

By Jacqueline Flood, Club President

If you are reading this, that means the Secretary of BMWMOGA (Keith Anderson) working in conjunction with the Newsletter Editor (Claudia Marsh) has done a terrific job in getting everything compiled and sent to the correct email address for your enjoyment.

Something Keith said recently caused me to give thanks for all that he does, as well as the efforts of those who volunteer their time to make our club great. When everything's going well, nobody complains. But if something happens, he's usually the first one to hear about it. The position of Secretary is an incredibly large job consuming vast quantities of personal time. If anything happens, it happens and life should go on.

When we receive our membership cards in the mail or show up at the rally and we're miraculously accounted for, how many people stop to wonder about the amount of work that has gone on behind the scenes to get these small jobs accomplished?

Where would we be without a diligent secretary who makes sure every member is in the Roster? The Newsletter Editor (Claudia Marsh) uncomplainingly makes changes and phone calls for quotes on different jobs suggested by the Board and puts together a monthly newsletter for all of us to enjoy.

Where indeed would we be without Jane Moore, the Rally Chair who over the period of a year lined up everything for a 3-day party for upwards of 900 attendees? This is no mean feat.

It's not only individual efforts, but efforts of individuals working together that get the jobs done. Keith and Jane working in conjunction to pull off a tremendous rally effort; Jane and Norma Wiles, the Treasurer, making sure everything is paid for and the i's are dotted and the t's are crossed. All the volunteers combining their mental and physical energies to pull off another Rally that many BMW riders across the country look forward to attending.

Where would the President be without Vice President Jeff Anderson? He is literally my right arm. He is not only there for me but willingly helps out with Secretarial chores and whatever else is needed.

Norma's business sense keeps us solvent, which is an invaluable asset for any board. She has the awesome job of minding all the money and sending checks to everyone who needs one.

Directors not only have a wealth of knowledge and savvy advice but also make wonderful sounding boards. Without them we'd be floundering in deep water pretty quickly. Roger Brooking, such a quiet gentleman, (until you get him going) has much to offer from years of running his own business. It's a very lucky President who has such a great board and who also gets to keep the past President as a Director for the next year. Not only does Ian have a wealth of knowledge and an incredible memory but is willing to share it. Thank you all.

Ride Captain Vince Eugenio has become a catalyst for the Ride Challenges; enthusiastically encouraging folks to not only participate but to share their ideas for new ways we can have fun. He continually thinks "outside the box" and contributes on many levels.

Let's begin an obsessive tradition of thanking each other for the contributions made to help allow us freedom through the air, safety keeping our backs covered and friendship with a common cause. And...thank you all for allowing me to be with you.



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Perimeter of Georgia 5 Corners Ride

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after all. I also decided to reverse course and head back to the pavement now about a mile and a half behind me. "Okay, no problem." Just turn around and return from whence I came. No problem, except for the deep sand I was now standing in. The soft sand, easily 4-6 inches deep, was even higher outside the tire tracks left by trucks. Every time I'd try to turn, the front tire would plow straight ahead through the sand. There was no traction for turning. I couldn't get out of the tire tracks! I was stuck! Yeah, yeah, I know...just gun the engine, lean the bike, balance on an outstretched foot, then the bike will fish-tail around and end up facing the opposite direction. Sure, I've seen these done lots of times. However, always by some 20-year-old daredevil riding a 400cc dirt bike who has no concept of pain. I've never seen this type of maneuver on a fully loaded BMW R-1100GS and I wasn't about to try.

I tried to walk the bike. I tried slipping the clutch to control traction. I even tried to push the bike out of the ruts and turn it. Nothing worked. After about five minutes of struggle, an approaching truck stopped and the driver asks if I need help. "Yes," I said and told the driver I was heading for St. Mary's. Asking how far it was to the paved road, he said, "oh, about 17 miles or so, and the road gets worse the further you go." Geez, 17 miles!

Now I really knew I had to turn around. And that's just what I did: turned around with the help of two guys in the truck. We pushed and pulled the heavily laden GS. Finally, it was pointing back in the right direction. Which is to say back from where I came? I took a few pictures before heading back to the road and then took off. After a few touch and go moments, I was greatly relieved to get the GS's tires back on smooth clean asphalt. (Note To Self: I am no Jimmy Lewis. I am not quite ready for the Paris/Dakar Rally. Look into some dirt riding classes.)

Turns out the north/south paved road I had returned to was, in fact, FL



121. There were no signs at the intersection nor was there a state boundary sign that might've tipped me off as to my location. Moreover, the unpaved road was what I was expecting to see. So, it's no wonder I got off route.

Safely back on the proper "shortcut," I headed towards St. Mary's, the southeastern coastal corner of Georgia. After picking up I-95, I rode north about five miles before taking GA HWY 40 to St. Mary's. The final few miles into St. Mary's were along a wide 6-lane business boulevard with lots of stoplights but after my earlier dirt road escapades, I minded neither the stoplights nor the traffic. Arriving at St. Mary's at 0747 and 85,601 miles, I quickly found the Cumberland Island National Seashore sign at the foot of HWY 40 and snapped the "required" photo.

After St. Mary's it was back to I-95. I had planned to take secondary roads as much as possible but by now, what with taking the "shortcut" and having to repair the damage from the previous night's fall, I was way behind my planned schedule. So I took the Interstate to make-up time.

Wait a minute! Damage? Previous night's fall? What fall was that? What damage? I did mention it, didn't I? No! Okay, here's what happened. It's a good thing I can laugh at myself...nevertheless, I don't want to hear any wisecracks about this incident. Anyway, I pull into the Days Inn motel and park right outside the lobby door under the brilliantly lit marquee entrance. The lobby has glass all around and a fabulous view of the parking lot and all activities therein. I check-in and the desk clerk gives me my key and directs me to my room, which is on the other end of the building opposite to the direction the bike

was pointing. I, Mr. BMW GS Adventure Rider, coolly leave the front desk, put on my helmet to, I imagine, the envious stares all that are within eye-shot. I'm making a real show of this and frankly, I'm enjoying the imagined envious stares. I mount-up, start the bike, and turn the handlebars sharply. This is going to be cool, a quick 180-degree turn out of the marquee-lit lobby entrance. All was well until the bike started moving. I begin the turn. I put my right foot down for balance. Wait a minute! Where's the pavement? About two inches beyond my reach was where it was! Unbeknownst to me, there was a slight decline in the pavement that I had not detected when I began my performance. My foot never touched down – at least not while the bike was still upright!

I hadn't gone two feet before toppling over on the right side. So there I am, on my side with the GS on top of me with motor still running. I couldn't turn off the engine because the stupid tank bag blocked the shutoff switch and I couldn't get the bag out of the way. So there I lay with the motor running mortified that the entire motel population may have seen me go over. I was just crawling out from underneath the bike when the middle-aged and vastly overweight, never seen a lick of physical activity, country-born-n-raised desk clerk comes running out of the lobby SCREAMING, "OH MY GOSH! OH MY GOSH! ARE YOU OKAY? ARE YOU OKAY?" This is bad. "Please, please don't call any more attention to this" is flashing through my mind. Now standing over the still running GS, I act nonchalant and tell her, "Oh yeah, I'm fine...no problem. This happens from time to time. No big deal." (Just go away and pretend you didn't see a thing I'm thinking.) Then she asks if I want her help lift the bike. (This is getting out of control! I'm soooo embarrassed! If I don't get out of here quick, the whole town is going to be laughing at me.) "No, no, it just takes a second. I can get it." Fortunately, the desk clerk, sweaty and out of breath from the exertion of running to my rescue, waddles back into the

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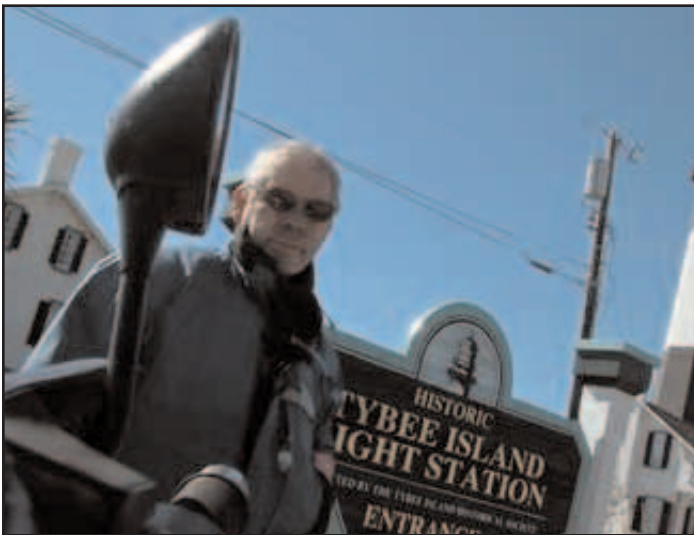
Perimeter of Georgia 5 Corners Ride

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lobby and had her back turned when I kicked the curb in disgust at my motorcycling stupidity demonstration. Geez, why don't these things happen in private?

Anyway, doing my best "Skert" imitation I got the bike back up. Then a quick look-around to see if anyone else had witnessed my fall. There was a Waffle House or Huddle House, some other House-type Restaurant in the next parking area, but since no one was gawking, or pointing my direction, I didn't think anyone saw me, Mr. BMW Adventure Rider "lay the bike down." After my witness search, I carefully rode out from under the marquee lights and to my room where I retreated to anonymous safety out of the public's view. (Note to Self: **This is important. Accidents can happen in the blink of an eye. Always be prepared for the worst. Do not ride for even one foot without a helmet securely in place.**)

The next day when I left the hotel the Throttlemeister wasn't working. Unbeknownst to me the fall had pushed the handgrip in about a 1/4 inch so the friction wouldn't engage. That was the damage I had to repair before continuing.



So, where was I? Oh yes...at a Waffle House next to I-95 in Brunswick at 0819 and 85,611 having breakfast and readjusting the throttle grip so the Throttlemeister would work! Adjusting the throttle grip should've been easy but it took me what seemed like forever because the GS's toolkit Philips-head screwdriver wouldn't grip the danged screw head. I was about to give-up when the screw finally broke loose and I was able to access adjust the throttle grip. (Note to self: Upgrade tools in the tool kit. BMW-issued tools that came with the bike are barely adequate.) Greatly relieved the Throttlemeister was working again I jumped on I-95 at 0915 and rode north towards Savannah and Tybee Island. After the morning's misadventures, it felt good to be cruising up the Interstate.

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Perimeter of Georgia 5 Corners Ride

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Resisting the urge to try another “shortcut” depicted on the GPS map display I reach Savannah. Going through Savannah there was a several-mile stretch of narrow divided boulevard that wasn’t much fun. Other than that, the ride through town wasn’t too bad. However, traffic was such that I couldn’t divert any attention to admiring the beautiful homes and squares of Savannah.

Out of Savannah, I rode under sunny skies and mid-60’s temperatures. Then it was over the causeway bridge towards Tybee Island. I could see the lighthouse off in the distance and after a few more minutes I arrived at 1133 and 85,739 miles on the odometer.

The Tybee Island Lighthouse is located on the grounds of Fort Screven. I didn’t spend much time exploring the fort but it looks like an interesting place. Huge artillery emplacements overlooking the coastline, beautiful parade grounds and of course, the lighthouse. I spent 20 minutes taking the required photo followed by shopping for a gift for my wife in the nearby gift shop. By now, it was time to move on for the next stop of the perimeter of Georgia ride: Augusta.

Leaving Tybee Island I picked up US HWY 80 through town along the waterfront to GA HWY 21 where I turned towards Augusta. For several miles, HWY 21 is a very busy 4-lane commercial boulevard but soon the road wind back out into the country. HWY 21 to Millen, GA and then HWY 25 north to Augusta about 45 miles away.



Arriving in Augusta I looked for Augusta National Golf Club which I planned to use as the via for Augusta. My maps showed only a general location for Augusta National and by the time I arrived traffic was heavy. So, rather than search for the main gate of Augusta National I used the Masters Corner sign across the street from one of the golf course’s side entrances. It was now 1538 and 85,898 miles were on the odometer.

After a few photos and a cup of coffee it was time to leave Augusta and ride up HWY 28 to Satolah, GA, the final corner of the 5-corners rides. Most of HWY 28 is in South Carolina but I chose this route because it was marked as a

scenic road on Rand McNally’s South Carolina road map. I had been looking at this particular road on the map for years so I was anxious to get underway.

Leaving Augusta, HWY 28 is a typical busy 4-lane boulevard with lots of stoplights and cross traffic. Soon the road is back out in the countryside traversing rolling hills of forests and farms. By now, it was getting dark so even though I was on a scenic road I wasn’t able to see much. In Anderson, SC, I picked up HWY 24 west to Tokeena and then took HWY 59 north to pickup HWY 28 again in Seneca. From Seneca it was HWY 28 straight to Satolah. Well straight in the sense that HWY 28 was the road that took me directly to Satolah. In a round-a-bout way! Because if any of you have traveled HWY 28 you know that it is anything but straight. Oh, my, hang on!

Like most BMW riders I certainly love to ride in the mountains and twisty’s. HWY’s 60, 129, and 180 out of Dahlonega are among my favorite roads. And the Cherohalla? Definitely the favorite! So is HWY 28 south of Highlands, NC where Satolah lies. However, on a moonless pitch-black night, after about 1,200 miles and going on 30 hours of riding over the past two days HWY 28 was not a lot of fun. It took every ounce of concentration to keep the bike on the road. The night was pitch-black without a hint of the forest or terrain visible outside the direct beam of the headlights. Even with the GS’s two big auxiliary lights blazing away it was still difficult to anticipate which way the road was going to twist. Then there were the contour changes to deal with. Wow! Even at 25 miles per hour it was a challenge because a lot of the visual cues we normally use, such as looking ahead through the trees to see a few turns ahead or being able to see the contours change, were just not there on that particular night. At times I could feel the onset of vertigo as the road turned, banked, and changed contour all at the same time. What a weird sensation! I was glad I was propelled along by a big GS engine and didn’t have a lot of gear shifting to do as I had enough to handle just keeping the bike on the road without having to change gears at every turn and slope.

Oh, boy! There! I just passed War Woman Road. Hang on. Just a little further. Ease-up on the handgrips. Stay in the middle of the road. Watch that sharp turn rising to the right. The road is climbing steeply. I think! Or, is that vertigo? My body is telling me one thing and my eyes, what they can see, are telling me another. Just like in an airplane, rely on the instruments I tell myself. Only in this case the “instruments” are the road’s centerline and edge line. Concentrate. Concentrate...I was concentrating so hard on the road that I almost missed Satolah.

Satolah, the one and only perimeter corner that I didn’t previously scout, turned out to be a small Volunteer Fire Department building atop a very steep driveway that lies at the end of a very sharp, blind right hand turn.

Wow, that came up fast! I had just enough time to stop before passing the firehouse. Once stopped then there was the steep driveway to contend with. There were virtually no

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Arm Chair Touring

By Dave Westfall

“The KLR is a rugged and cost-effective answer to long-distance dual-sport riding. Like all bikes, it requires patient and consistent maintenance – if maintained, it’s nearly indestructible.” At least that was the opinion of Andres Carlstein after completing 22,000 miles



on his Kawasaki from upstate New York to the tip of South America, including a detour to Miami, as relayed in *Odyssey to Ushuaia*. (Obligatory BMW content: he was accompanied by two BMW GS riders, and I recently bought a KLR from a member of our BMW club, influenced in part by reading this book).

Andres was a first generation United States citizen, with a large extended family in Argentina. He was also not ready to settle down after finishing college at Penn State. Resurrecting a childhood dream of riding a motorcycle to Argentina to visit aunts and uncles he had never known, he began researching all aspects of such an adventure. Ideal motorcycle, appropriate gear, best route, necessary arrangements – all were thoroughly evaluated. He also sought, and found, two riding companions via the internet, and arranged to meet them in Texas. By his own admission he started (and ended) their time together as something of a misfit and a “PITA” (no, that’s not a typo for a popular driving light). Robert and Peter were both older, married, more organized, more detail-oriented – and more punctual. In other words, typical BMW riders! While Robert, in particular, was determined to see all of the archeological sights throughout Central and South America, and had planned a tight schedule to accomplish that, Andres seemed more interested in exploring the attributes of various women they encountered in their travels. After all night parties with his conquests it was often difficult for him to be “tank full, bladder empty” when his companions were ready to depart, contributing to the backdrop of friction that existed between them for much of the trip.

Most accounts of adventure touring, especially in “third world” countries, discuss the rigors of border crossings. This trip was no exception. They had their share of corrupt officials and cops demanding bribes. Andres’ passable Spanish and Peter’s fluent Spanish (he had spent his early years in Colombia) were key to having as little trouble as they did. Road surfaces ranged from modern highways to rutted stream beds, and they endured a wide range of climatic conditions. Finding tires, necessary parts, gas, and facilities for welding broken bike frames back together again were all part of the challenge. All of the riders experienced falls, but none with any serious injuries. Andres, not surprisingly, was the only one to have a significant accident – a head-on collision with a truck rounding a curve on a mountain road.

The ultimate destination was the millennium party held at the end of 1999 in Ushuaia at the southernmost tip of South America. Although Robert and Peter had to end the trip prematurely to deal with some issues back home, Andres joined the throng of multinational bikers – at least 50 – who had made the journey. They shared a common bond of hardship and achievement to be there, and had a great celebration.

Much to Andres’ dismay, his plans to ride the bike back home were thwarted by his discovery that he had spent all of his money. Ten months on the road, interrupted by too-frequent lavish stays in luxurious surroundings and reckless partying, had taken more of a financial toll than he realized! (It sure sounded like fun while it lasted though!) He was forced to store the bike with a Kawasaki dealer in Argentina and book a flight home with the last of his money.

If you are now ready to leap from your arm chair and start packing for your own adventure, let me refer you to the Appendix of the book for guidance. There are detailed trip lists for each of the riders (who knew you could go ten months with only 4 shirts and 3 pairs of pants?) Clothing, riding gear, tools, spare parts, maps, and finances – everything you’ll need is listed. And don’t forget the “miscellaneous” – that’s probably exactly what you couldn’t do without!

Good luck on your own odyssey!

Motorcycle Safety

Reprinted from The Line

Motorist awareness is an important component of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s comprehensive motorcycle safety program. Over two-thirds of fatal motorcycle crashes involve a motorcycle and another vehicle. The motorist either does not see the oncoming motorcycle at all or does not see the motorcycle in time to avoid a crash. It is important for motorists to know that their actions affect the safety of motorcyclists. A motorist and a motorcyclist may take different actions for the same driving or highway situation. As a motorist or a passenger, there are

some steps to become more aware of motorcyclists.

Respect the motorcyclist: Remember the motorcycle is a vehicle with all of the privileges of any vehicle on the roadway. Give the motorcyclist a full lane of travel.

Look out: Look for the motorcyclist on the highway, at intersections, when a motorcyclist may be making a left turn, and when a motorcyclist may be changing lanes. Clearly signal your intentions.

Anticipate a motorcyclist’s maneuver: Obstructions (debris, potholes, etc.) that you may ignore or not notice can

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Motorcycle Safety

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be deadly for a motorcyclist. Predict evasive actions.

Allow plenty of space: Don't follow a motorcycle too closely. Allow enough room for the motorcyclist to take evasive actions.

If you ride, here are some useful tips to help ensure your safety.

Be visible: Remember that motorists often have trouble seeing motorcycles and reacting in time. Make sure your headlight works and is on day and night. Use reflective strips or decals on your clothing and on your motorcycle. Be aware of the blind spots cars and trucks have. Flash your brake light when you are slowing down and before stopping. If a motorist doesn't see you, don't be afraid to use your horn.

Dress for safety: Wear a quality helmet and eye protection. Wear bright clothing and a light-colored helmet. Wear leather or other thick, protective clothing. Choose long sleeves and pants, over-the-ankle boots, and gloves. Remember - the only thing between you and the road is your protective gear.

Apply effective mental strategies: Constantly search the road for changing conditions. Give yourself space and time to respond to other motorists' actions. Give other motorists time and space to respond to you.

Motorcycling is primarily a solo activity, but for many, riding as a group - whether with friends on a Sunday morning ride or with an organized motorcycle rally - is the epitome of the motorcycling experience. Here are some tips to help ensure a fun and safe group ride:

Arrive prepared. Arrive on time with a full gas tank. Hold a riders' meeting. Discuss things like the route, rest and fuel stops, and hand signals. Assign a lead and sweep (tail) rider. Both should be experienced riders who are well

versed in group riding procedures. The leader should assess everyone's riding skills and the group's riding style.

Keep the group to a manageable size, ideally five to seven riders. If necessary, break the group into smaller subgroups, each with a lead and sweep rider.

Ride prepared. At least one rider in each group should pack a cell phone, first-aid kit, and full tool kit, so the group is prepared for any problem that they might encounter.

Ride in formation. A staggered riding formation allows a proper space cushion between motorcycles so that each rider has enough time and space to maneuver and to react to hazards. The leader rides in the left third of the lane, while the next rider stays at least one second behind in the right third of the lane; the rest of the group follows the same pattern. A single-file formation is preferred on a curvy road, under conditions of poor visibility or poor road surfaces, entering/leaving highways, or other situations where an increased space cushion or maneuvering room is needed.

Avoid side-by-side formations, as they reduce the space cushion. If you suddenly needed to swerve to avoid a hazard, you would not have room to do so. You don't want handlebars to get entangled.

Periodically check the riders following in your rear view mirror. If you see a rider falling behind, slow down so they may catch up. If all the riders in the group use this technique, the group should be able to maintain a fairly steady speed without pressure to ride too fast to catch up.

If you're separated from the group, don't panic. Your group should have a pre-planned procedure in place to regroup. Don't break the law or ride beyond your skills to catch up.

For mechanical or medical problems, use a cell phone to call for assistance as the situation warrants.

Perimeter of Georgia 5 Corners Ride

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flat spots in which to park. I tried to park in several locations before finding a spot where the GS was stable enough for me to dismount and take a picture. It was now 1950 with 86,058 miles on the odometer.



By snapping the Satolah photo I had completed my mission of riding around the Perimeter of Georgia to the 5-Corners of the state. Mission accomplished, I still had to ride home or find a motel to spend the night. I was a little tired. Well actually, I was very tired. However, from experience I knew I still had a few hours of energy reserves so I decided to ride home. But instead of riding back down HWY 28 and picking up War Woman Road, which I probably would've done in daylight, I decided to press on to Highlands, NC and take the more gently curving and more familiar HWY 106 back to Dillard.

After a quick bite to eat and a phone call home in Clayton, GA around 2230 I was ready for the final leg of my adventure back to Roswell. Feeling energized by the food and coffee it was down HWYs 23 and 53 back to GA-400. GA-400 was wonderful that night. Light traffic, high speed,

excellent visibility and above all, no curves. GA-400 home to Roswell was a relaxing way to end the trip. I arrived home shortly before midnight at 2355 with 86,195 on the odometer having ridden 1,384 miles in two days.

Epilogue

It has now been several months since riding around the perimeter of Georgia to the 5-corners of the state. With the benefit of hindsight I can say that the ride totally met my expectations. It was challenging, but not overly so. It took me to parts of the state that I had never traveled before. On all sorts of roads: from interstates to twisty mountain two-lanes; to city boulevards; to infamous sandy shortcuts, riding the perimeter of Georgia samples them all. Saw a lot of beautiful countryside but also some not so beautiful areas too. I can't think of a better way of seeing our state than from the saddle of a BMW motorcycle. Best of all, riding the perimeter of Georgia just got me out riding. It also gave a sense of purpose to the ride. Would I do it again? You bet! In fact I'm planning a second perimeter ride later this spring. Only this time I'll go in the opposite direction riding my brand-new R-1100S that I just recently acquired as a second bike. If you decide to ride the perimeter of Georgia, keep an eye out for a silver S-bike. It may be me!

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